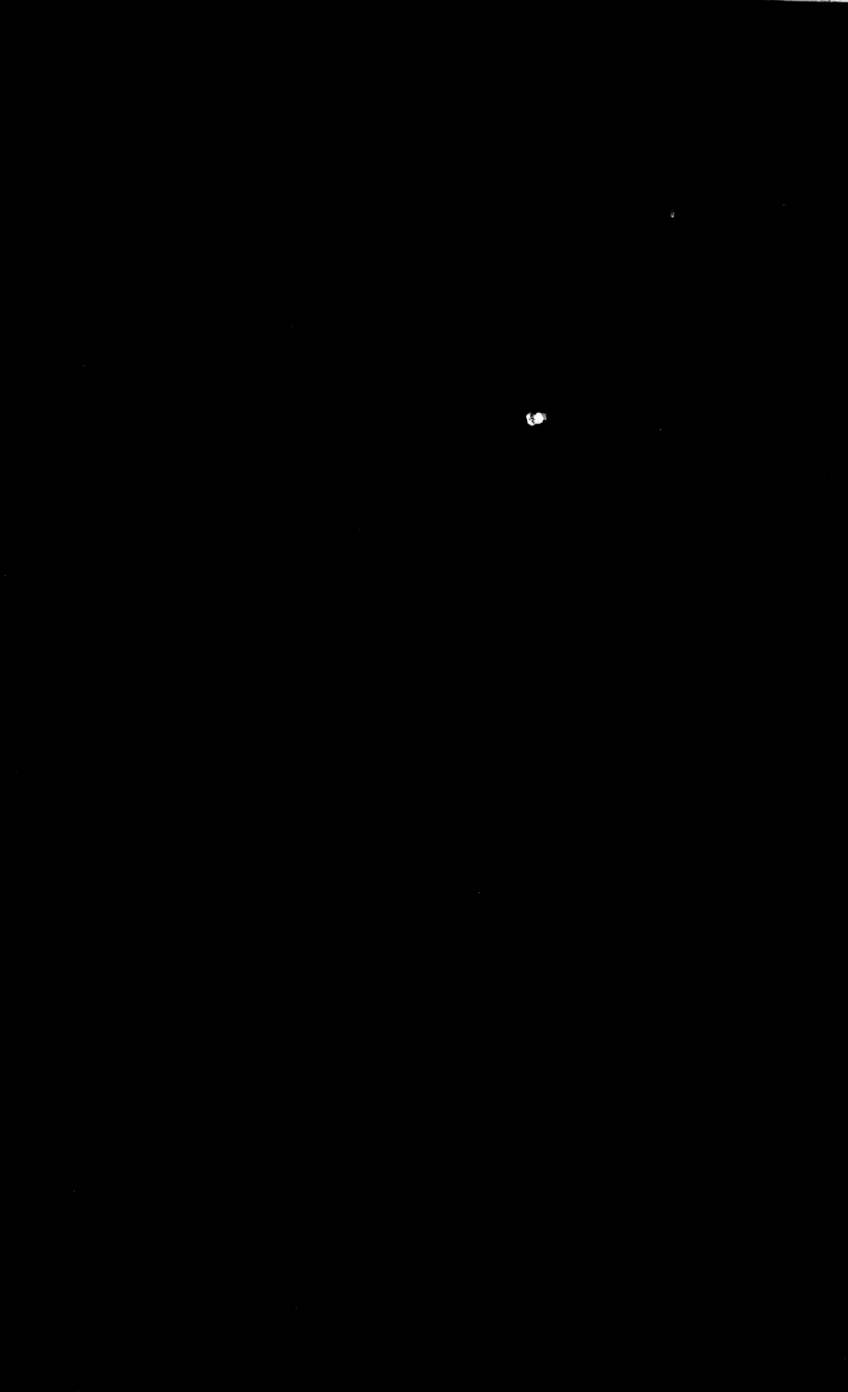
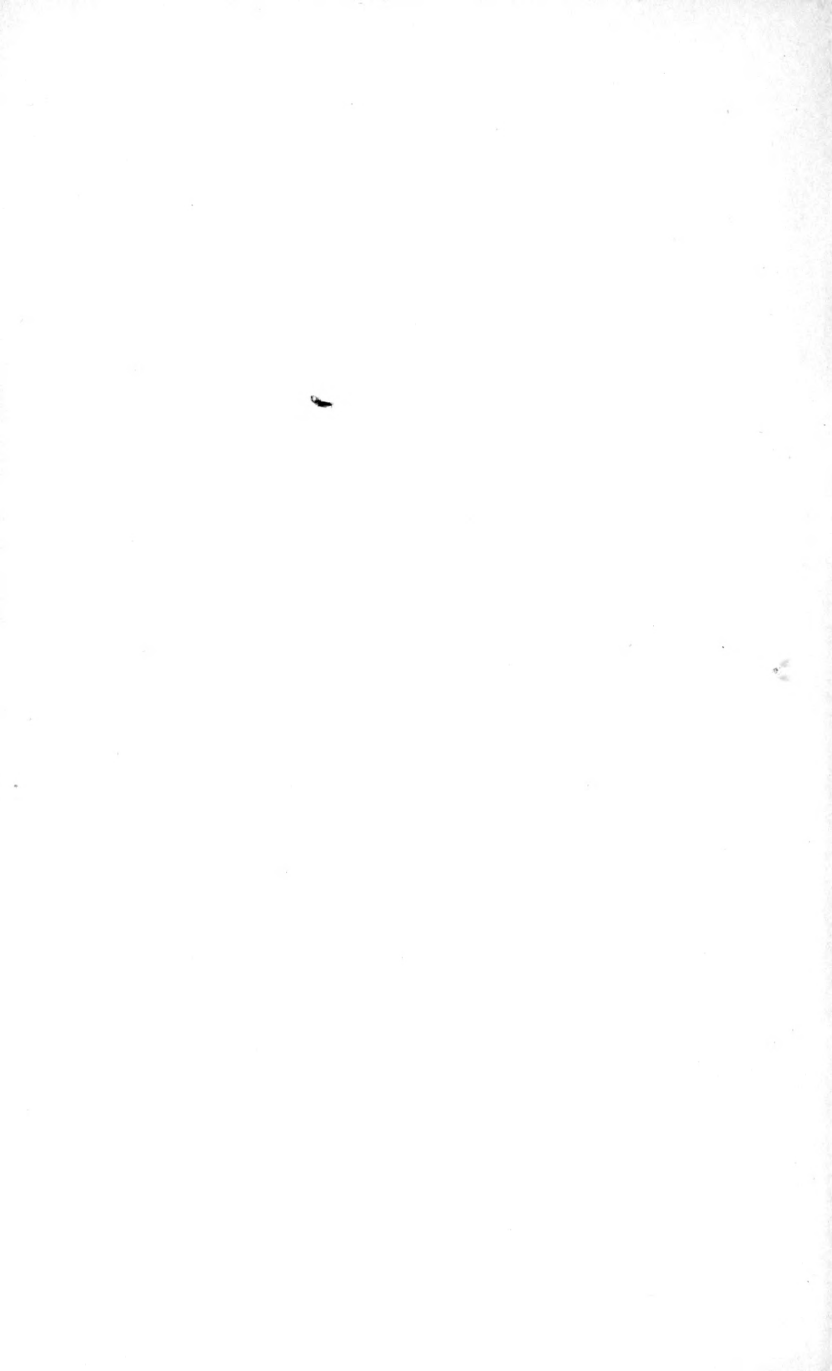


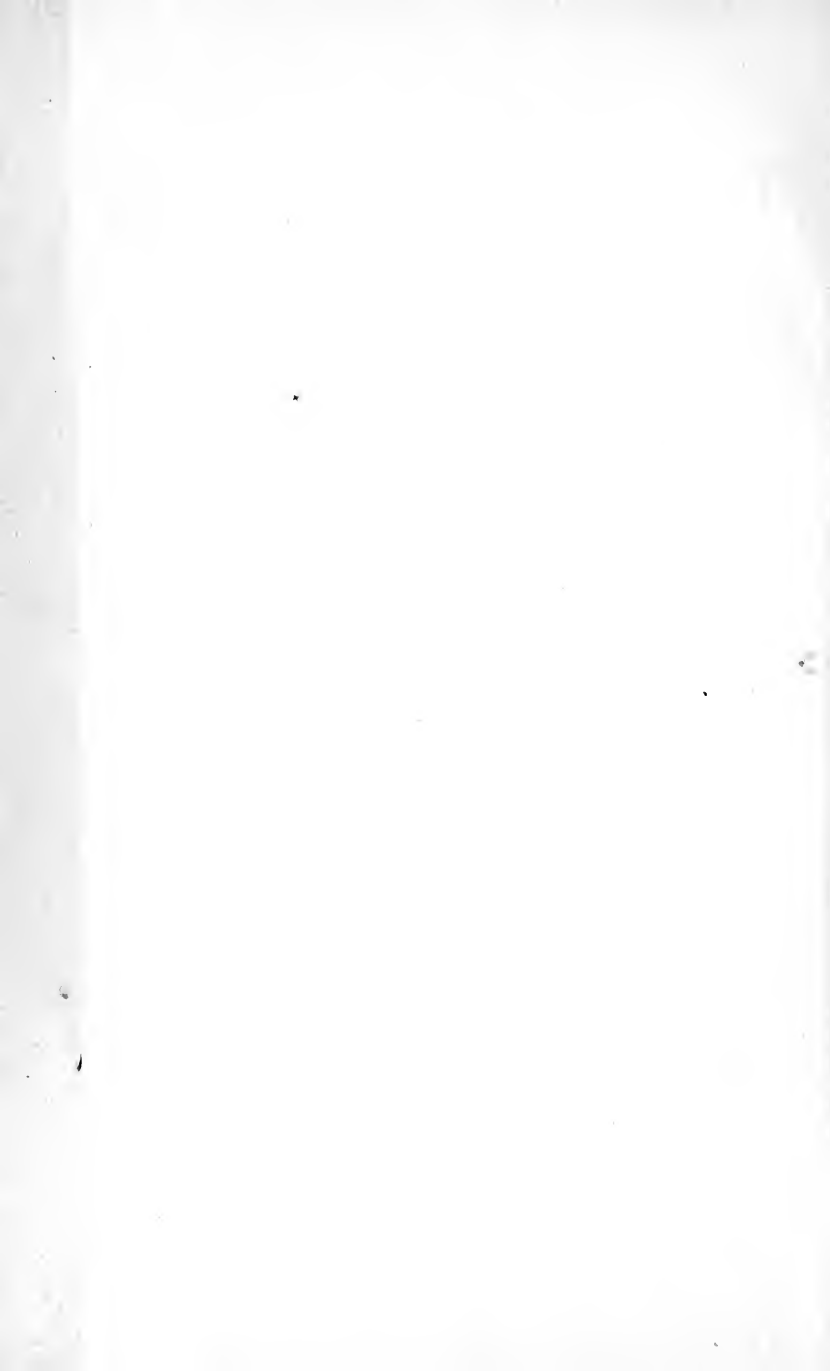
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The Fundamental Problems  
of Metaphysics



# The Fundamental Problems of Metaphysics

BY

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## P R E F A C E.

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THOUGH I have often had occasion to touch upon the subjects treated in this book, it is yet doubtful if I should have written this work without important request behind. In the historical references, I have had to excise portions—particularly in the Mediæval period—of what I had written, with a view to making the work more suitable for readers in a generation that does not reckon patience among its greatest virtues. Primarily prepared for philosophical readers, those parts of the book which relate to subjects like the First Cause and the World-Ground will not fail to interest theological readers also. An extended study of the literature of the subjects dealt with convinced me that there was ample need and room for such a work, and that it would occupy a sufficiently distinctive place.

JAMES LINDSAY.

ANNICK LODGE, IRVINE,  
*July 1910.*

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## METAPHYSICS AS SCIENCE.

**A**

the beginning and the final ground. Experience marks the limits of scientific knowledge. Scientific inquiry is before all things inquiry which is conformable with fact, and not only the origin, but also the application, of all conceptions is limited to experience. Metaphysics grasps the inner essence of reality, the last ground of being. For metaphysics is the philosophy of the Real. It therefore keeps close to palpitating reality. The adequate hypothesis—the all-comprehending concept—sought by it will be no vain abstraction. The instinct for reality must be maintained in its quest for the highest categories. The real unity of the universe; its ground and its goal; the nature of man's soul; these are themes in respect of which it must give earnest and humble heed to what is objective. Meta-physics must take primary account, in its theory of reality, of evolution as principle of becoming, and must show the end which evolution subserves in compelling thought to recognise the necessity of teleology or the fact of purpose in nature. It must find the real truth of Eleatic being in Heraclitean becoming, such becoming forming the concrete unity of being and not being. But Eleatic being and Heraclitean becoming are both monistic. The subject-matter of the science of metaphysics is Ultimate Reality or the Absolute, taken as an harmonious or internally coherent system. The real is experience. The materials or data of reality are experience. Experience is not only real, but is of reality—the reality experienced. The reality of experience must be carefully distinguished from the reality of the

Absolute. We shall see, later, how our psychical experience is taken up into the larger experience of the Absolute. This talk of experience will lose its subjective cast, the more it is remembered that Reality as a whole is what the science of Metaphysics seeks to grasp. Being may be one or many. It may be found in the Real or in the Ideal. The metaphysical view of the world, which comprehends the world of becoming, also takes various forms. But metaphysics seeks a connection with the whole, and the unity of the Real and the Ideal. And it must be a metaphysic of Spirit no less than of Nature, for reality forms a unified whole. Metaphysic is a discipline, which starts out from experience, and, as a system, has the whole world of experience for its basis. This basis of metaphysical knowledge is extraordinarily broad. The task of metaphysic lies just in the deepening, expounding, and interpreting of experience. The metaphysic of experience, in its possibility, necessity, and reality, must be scientifically comprehended. For that is the end of metaphysical science. If one reflects with how great difficulties the science of metaphysics has to contend, one no longer thinks slightly of metaphysical attempts at solution. The task of metaphysical science is to grasp the problems more deeply and sharply, and to draw always nearer to a true solution. The primary position is that of Metaphysics, whereby, as presupposition of the special problems of Ethics, Psychology, and Logic, it must take logical precedence of them, and profoundly affect their direction and treatment. This, while

Metaphysics may receive, from their detailed out-working, fulness of form and content. Never was the need for such a *philosophia prima*, a true metaphysic, more deeply felt. The metaphysic we seek will ground its laws, not in any molecular movements of things physical, but in the Divine Nature or Essence. An ethical metaphysic—and not a bare ontology or science of being—that ultimate metaphysic must be, as part of its endeavour to be a true metaphysic. For the Unconditioned Being, Who is the original principle of life, is wholly ethical in His nature. But an ethical metaphysic claims no credence that has not the support of science: the sciences of nature and the sciences of spirit—in other words, our external and our internal experience—are unified in one thinking subject, and dualism is transcended. We have no *à priori* category of Reality: our thinking operates upon perceptual data; these data show non-contradiction to be an universal characteristic of Reality, as it appears to our thinking. Our immediate psychical experience has relation to reality beyond itself, and independent of it. The world we know only as presented to consciousness, thereby becoming a fact of consciousness: in such knowledge of the world, and in study of significance of human life, do we find the objectivity of the science of metaphysics. The science of metaphysics is most deeply needed to-day, that it may determine for us what can and cannot be known of being and the laws of being *à priori*—in other words, from those necessities of the mind, or laws of being, which, though first revealed to us by experi-

ence, must yet have pre-existed, in order to make experience itself possible. It is, then, precisely the world opened to our view by the vast and varied constructive activity revealed in experience, which presents to our view the problem of metaphysics. It is the nature of metaphysics to be critical of that activity throughout its whole range. It is the nature of metaphysics to embrace both being and knowing—ontology and epistemology, and a complete theory of experience in the comprehensive sense, which we have already set forth, would mean a perfect metaphysic. Why not make one thing of all reality, of all experience, whether possible or actual? Why should not the transcendent, too, be experience, not something in itself erected outside experience? In the conception of an absolute experience, the transcendent will, of course, be included, the transcendent being transcendent only in respect of my finite and relative experience. To such an absolute experience I ascribe intensive infinity, and while making experience thus one, hold reality always to transcend vastly our finite experience. But the methods of science exist for the very purpose of making our experience complete, by virtue of the synthetic unity of perceptions that are valid and necessary. My perceptions of reality, that appears independent of my perceptions, attain validity as they are related to a common consciousness. It is in this universality of consciousness that the science of psychology finds objectivity as being true for all. Experience, however, is vastly more than the sum of many inter-related perceptions. Idealistic metaphysic discards

the Real Presentationism of Hamilton, wherein real things were supposed to be presented to us in perception, and were taken to be apprehended just as they are. For perception involves relativity: the object perceived is known only in relation to the perceiver. That is to say, it is known only as perceived, not as it is apart from its being apprehended. Perception is fragmentary, or at least incomplete, and is not always even true. Perception is, besides, mediated by physiological factors, so that our knowledge is of things as they affect us, rather than as they are. In respect of some recent discussions, it must be said that our presentations are most clearly psychical, and not physical. The universality of perceptions conditions their being elements of experience. "Metaphysics," says Koenig, "seeks to bring reality to absolute conceptions, while the concrete sciences content themselves with notions relatively perfect." The scientific character of metaphysics has become *de rigueur*, but our insistence on metaphysical rigour need not be of a kind to exclude the broadest range and the greatest height of vision. Kant called metaphysics the science which advances from the knowledge of the sensible to the knowledge of the supersensible by means of reason. Reason demands the Whole, but reason does not demand form and unity here, matter and manifoldness there. It demands the closed harmonious Whole, while the principle of unity perpetually rules. Metaphysics holds the office of censor in the kingdom of the sciences. The metaphysics of criticism teaches us to apprehend the world and all its products as appear-

ances, that is to say, mere representations. Kant was contented with scientific investigation and representation of the knowledge of experience, and gave, no doubt, an impulse to science in the narrow sense of the term. But on Bradley's criterion, all experience must prove itself unreal. He falls back on the old conception, drawn from Mediæval Realism, of degrees of truth or reality, although Cusanus pointed out that truth in degrees is no longer truth. Bradley has no satisfactory solution to give of the problem how degrees of reality are possible, how what is not real—has only more or less reality—falls into the kingdom of reality. With Bradley, no individual moment of experience is in itself real. All reality consists in psychic experience, and the relative is only real in the measure in which it is absolute. Dr Bradley cannot be said to solve the metaphysical problem at all. For the difficulty remains wherein the difference between the degrees of reality consists, and how this difference is in general to be apprehended. Reality is, then, something implicated in our cognitive experience, which is interpretative of such reality. The science of metaphysics consists of reasoned insights into the nature of reality. It claims the epistemological right to transcend all agnostic limitations in the exercise of reason's potencies. It inquires how the nature of reality accords with the totality of our experience. It examines the transcendent terms in the data of science—for science is not without a consciousness of the transcendent—to see whether they are adequate to metaphysical requirements. Science has no call to pursue the transcendent aspects of her

principles, but metaphysics has this very aim and need. The basal concepts of science do not provide the sort of categories that metaphysical reflection needs. In the transcendent, a domain appears which is one of abiding hypotheses. These hypotheses are scientifically necessary, as science grows reflective. In their right use and proportional valuation we catch sight of the true essence of scientific modes of view. The despisers of metaphysics, in the interest of science, see in the completion of experience which metaphysics offers, nothing but "mere subjective play without value," in fact, "an altogether purposeless, yea, foolish venture." For to them the rationalising of experience is the end neither of science nor of philosophy. To them science is only the one-sided mechanical inquiry into nature. They take it for the task of science to measure, not to value—to discover, not to explain. But a metaphysical view of the world seeks to explain or to rationalise it. The metaphysical completion of experience arises out of the problem of the unity of the world. The end of the scientific method is not a determinate personal relation to things, but the knowledge of their ground and connection. Metaphysics determines the last ground of the world-connection as spirit. But the Absolute Spirit is not a merely abstract monistic principle. It is not necessary that metaphysics solve the difference between spirit and nature in an abstract unity. To metaphysics, the world-connection is that of the world of immanent spirit. But this is not to break down all relation to what transcends the world. Nor is it to emulate the poor scientific rigidity which



denies the imaginative flight of thought, that transcends the limits of sense-perception, in its impulse to soar into the region of the infinite. The thought of metaphysics seeks to so supplement the reflection of science that a theory of reality shall be reached in which the absolute or transcendent nature shall be included. Metaphysics has to do, not only with the concepts of science, but with the whole of experience. Its supreme synthesis is reached only through analysis of the categories and interpretation of their significance, alike in respect of things and of selves. Metaphysics, as theory of the universe, is thus corrective of our knowledge through the special sciences. This conception of metaphysical science finds place in Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Herbart, Schopenhauer, Hartmann, and many other modern philosophers, and is much more correct than the procedure of Lotze, who makes his metaphysics include ontology, cosmology, and psychology, or that of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, who treat metaphysics proper, as inquiry into the essential nature of things, in a way which is really secondary. It seems to me no real objection to the universal validity of metaphysics as a science, that it cannot become stereotyped and final, because scientific postulates change and final co-ordination of facts is impossible. That is but to say it is progressive, like every other Science, with categories constantly being set differently in new conceptions.

The method of metaphysics is scientific. It follows up experience with the reflective method: it is critical of all the special sciences—their assumptions and

conclusions: it is synthetic in aim, and constructive in method. Like other sciences, it is a theoretic discipline. Herbart viewed philosophy as science because of the comprehensibility of experience. Metaphysics, in so far as it is science, does not conduct us beyond experience. Scientific metaphysics has only to do with our world of experience—not with an *ens extramundanum*—but intensively metaphysic leads us beyond experience. Intensively it does so, for no one has a right to lay narrower pretensions on metaphysics than on the other sciences. Metaphysics, like the other sciences, serves a theoretic need. “Man,” says Schopenhauer, “is a metaphysical animal,” and indeed the whole essence of man is metaphysical. Metaphysic springs out of the scientific endeavour to know the most universal trains or courses of the world-connection. The proper presupposition of metaphysics is the homogeneity of God and the world. Its principle is, being that is grounded in itself. Metaphysic determines for its main fact the world as whole: it rests entirely upon experience and moves towards the world-whole. It embraces the world as totality. What divides metaphysics from the other sciences is not its method, but only the universality of its task. For metaphysics is indeed a science, and the crown of all sciences. The greatest scientific performances owe their origin to this speculative activity of reason. Natural science is a discipline of hypotheses. The divinatory element of inquiry rules in the hypotheses, and just through such hypotheses—through, that is to say, speculative thought—comes to things new and radiant light.

Not even the limitations, serious enough, of mathematical modes of determination, must be forgotten, when the exactness and universality of mathematical truth are extravagantly represented. Metaphysical rigidity can be secured, like some Mathematical demonstrations, at grave cost of all *Uebersichtlichkeit* or power of survey. Mathematics, as a science of rigidly formal thought-operations and purely formal space-relations, is not only limited enough in its relations to real experience, but does not feel called to probe the ultimate significance of those conceptions with which it has to do—those of space and number, for example. There is certainly no need to form such a limited idea of Exactness, for, as Dühring has said, “true exactness, or, in general, accuracy is attainable everywhere if only we candidly distinguish between what we know and what we do not know, clearly determine how we know it, and accurately set forth the sources of this knowledge.” We therefore maintain that metaphysics does not sit more loosely to exact proof than mathematics, upon whose arbitrary character Poincaré and other mathematicians have insisted. The advance which metaphysics as a science, in taking up into itself the totality of experience, registers over against tolerably recent metaphysical insistences, is seen in the way these latter disclaimed all knowledge of being, as matter of experience. Experience, it was held, knows being only after its appearance, whereas metaphysics was supposed to know being in its objective reality—being as lying behind and above appearance—being as disclosed to pure thought. This procedure, far

from doing any manner of justice to experience, made of metaphysics a study of the supersensible—of transcendental being. The world of experience was expressly ruled out, and a world of being formed precisely by abstraction from sensible things. But such abstractions could not be realities, hence metaphysics could not be of the Real. What metaphysics has now come to believe is just that Reality is one, and that being, as represented by it, consists in experience. All finite things depend on something beyond themselves: in this consists their ideality. Reality is not given to us only in resistance, but also in that positive feeling of undivided wholeness, which individual reality or “this-ness” carries for us. The inner nature of such individual reality always tends to pass out of itself into some higher totality. Such a complete and articulated system of experience as is thus craved, embracing all factual, perceptual, conceptual, and reflective contents, is, in our view, essayed by the science of metaphysics. Retaining, like Hartmann, Volkelt, Eucken, Wundt, and others, a real noëtical basis, we can reach after real metaphysical results or conclusions, accordant with experience at its fullest measure and its highest reach or projection. Such a metaphysical construction will not only include the results of ordinary experience in all its manifold aspects, but will strive to do some sort of justice also to the special sciences, with their determinate, if partial, knowledge—a thing left wholly unattempted in the metaphysics, for example, of Dr Bradley. Whether dealing with the Absolute,

or with Being, or with Substance, metaphysics as a science must find these all in terms of experience, even if our experience cannot yield the full and final truth about any of them. But it must not allow subjectivistic tendencies to keep it from connecting a real external world with the world of our inner consciousness in a way that shall afford a satisfactory foundation whereon to rear the fabric of modern science. It is precisely the failure to do this that has given rise to much of the existing scientific contempt for metaphysics. But it is perfectly possible to make our theoretic knowledge of the world always more of the nature of exact science. And it is the character of exact science to consist of hypothetical, not categorical, judgments, and to connect itself with the principle of the relativity of knowledge. There does not seem to me to be any good and sufficient reason for metaphysics narrowing its interest to the why and whence of life, without attempting a world-view, which shall build up a whole of experience, in which due account shall be taken of the partial knowledges of the special, or individual, sciences. Difficult such an attempt must always be, but it is not superfluous, and is never without value. I am not saying that life can be either construed or re-constructed out of these partial knowledges, but only that full justice must be done to the important part they play in the metaphysical endeavour to construct that Whole of which I have already spoken. Deeper reality may, if you like, underlie the mighty world of concrete realities, of which these sciences testify, and

of which their world appearances are but symbols, but metaphysics is neither timid, nor fearful, nor unbelieving, before such deeper, intangible reality. For it knows the metaphysical element to be so strong in man as to relate him to a higher than the natural order of things. Human morality is, in its bases, metaphysical, and man's knowledge of reality is more than is given in perception. Nothing is more idle than the pretension that science is less anthropomorphic than philosophy, as if science were not equally an outcome and manifestation of human thinking! It is surely most obviously certain that the scientist, in any knowledge of Reality he may gain, can, no more than the metaphysician, jump off his own shadow, or make escape from the toils of his nature and powers. For knowledge of any sort, a certain true anthropomorphism is necessary, being, in fact, of the essence of rationality. Say what science will, this is the objectively real of science—a cognition which, critically viewed, is only subjectively valid. But the truth, necessarily so expressed here, will receive explication in a manner that does fuller justice to scientific knowledge, in the next chapter.

The task of speculative construction, intimately related as it is to the work of scientific construction, cannot be shirked by scientific metaphysics, however difficult may be the endeavour to realise a completely self-consistent and coherent systematisation of experience taken in whole. Not even the speculative physicist is content without feeling what call for ground or explanation underlies his

scientific conceptions of causation. This, although his scientific sequences are so helpless to supply him with ultimate grounds for the occurrence of all concrete events. The metaphysician cannot complete his speculative construction by means of such categories as being, essence, existence, substance, cause, &c., alone, but must find room for æsthetical, ethical, and religious aspects of experience as well. With these latter the purely scientific demands must, in order to completeness, be harmonised. Metaphysical science will show wherein reality as whole has its final ground. Speculative thought asserts that there is such a whole. Reason demands in an especial sense this All-ness—the Whole. To comprehend the Universe as a Whole is the task which metaphysics refuses to relinquish, however difficult it may be for us, with our finite experience, to reach a satisfactory speculative construction of absolute experience. No real attempt, however, is valueless, or to be despised by the wise. The experience of the Absolute must, in its nature, be comprehensible only to the Absolute itself, but we cannot but take such all-embracing experience as real. Metaphysics determines the concept of the Absolute—the unconditioned or Absolute Being—after time, space, and causality, and raises itself through causality, space, and time, to the idea of unity and of the whole, of the infinite and the eternal. This unity is the basis of speculation. The question of the essence and the quality of the Eternal Being is indeed the question. The Eternal Being must be not only original and necessary; it

must also remain what it is—an essence, a self-existing essence. The Spirit of this essence is the absolute Spirit. Over against this essence stands the world as appearance. In the world of actuality the world of appearance has been permeated with this essence, such actuality forming their concrete unity. The legitimacy of speculative attempts to understand the universe has been well brought out by Dr Bradley, when he has said that there are those for whom such efforts are “a principal way of experiencing the Deity.” The weightiest task of the present consists in the determination of the Infinite, but the conception of the really efficient which we to-day have, mediated only through causality, springs from what affects the human mind. This conception will always mean an imperfect one as to the essence of God, but one by no means fundamentally false. If one thinks of God as perfectly unrelated to the individual, and quite isolated from the human subject, one has a fundamentally false conception of God. But it is impossible to apprehend the essence of God in such a fashion. The Infinite is not to be conceived as excluding finitude and limit, but as including them in its ideality or sublatedness. Hence the saying of Schelling has here its truth, that the Infinite is the unity of the Infinite and the finite. The speculative method, properly conceived, is related to experience. Only in experience as a whole—only in the Absolute itself—is full reality to be found. The Absolute is the totality of being. We have the sciences of nature and those of spirit, and we perceive that,



in the course of time, they must realise the one science. For all truth is ultimately one, and the totality of things, however lying beyond our actual experience, can only be thought of by us as a unity. This unity of the universe is ideal counterpart of our actual experience as individual and unified, and beyond such experience we obviously cannot get. But we can take experience to be one and continuous, so that the subject of universal experience will, in said experience, be in line with the subject of individual or particular experience, our postulate here being the organic unity of experience. We have treated the world as one, Nature and Spirit forming one Whole, whose sole essence is reason, and whose sole substance is energy. We can thus claim for it the universal and immanent teleology of One Infinite Life—an immeasurable advance over any mere mechanical evolutionism, whether of a Spencer, or a Haeckel, or a Huxley. Metaphysics is a call to participation in the powers of this one Infinite Life, wherewith to arm ourselves for the great cosmic conflict in which we are engaged. It must take due account of the given in all its forms: its study of substance and causality must be drawn, not alone from consciousness and the system of the categories, but also from the view of Nature in her objectively given space-relations. We first proceed to shew that any speculative construction of reality, proceeding in scientific manner, must be reached *per substantiam*.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE METAPHYSICS OF SUBSTANCE.

LEAVING aside, for the present, such fundamental metaphysical conceptions as those of elemental Being, of Essence, and of Existence, we confine our chief and direct attention to those *Grundgedanken* of metaphysics with which scientific construction has more particularly to do. These—apart from quantitative or mathematical modes of determination—are, of course, the concrete conceptions of Substance and Causation. The Law of Causation was held by Schopenhauer to be the only, and the actual form of the understanding, the remaining eleven categories being “mere blind windows.” Substance and Cause are, without doubt, the categories that chiefly concern us. Without such notions as Substance and Cause, concrete facts could not be grouped into real sciences. Thus physical sciences would not exist without metaphysics, any more than metaphysics would exist without base and starting-point in the realm of physics. The relations of substance and cause, the two oldest categories of thought, may be noted. The views taken of them by Plato and Aristotle have been

already discussed elsewhere [Cf. my 'Studies in European Philosophy,' ch. ii.]. Substance is cause at rest, as cause is substance in operation. Change, which, from earliest times, has had a foremost place alike in physical and metaphysical speculation, is, in its beginnings, not conceivable without cause; but without substance, change, in its very idea, would be meaningless and absurd. Green says that the substance is the implication of the changes, and that, apart from the substance, no changes. A substance need not be an active cause; but a cause must be a substance, or being, in energy. But if there are senses in which there is no causation without substantiality, we shall presently see how relevant to our notions of substance, in a scientific age, it is to say that there is no substantiality without causality. But the sum of those changes, of which cause is the principle, call for something that persists, and transcends the world of change, making its change-system possible; that something is the principle of substance. Substance stands to cause in the relation of source to condition. Hence Hegel took substance to be cause of the modes, and modes to be the effects of the substance. If the ultimate elements elude us in their noumenal or substantial aspects, a permanent substratum of all existence may yet be postulated as a necessity of thought. In our time, the category of substance has had its truth transferred to the conception of self-activity as fundamental fact. This self-activity is no arch-juggler. It is the metaphysical answer of to-day to the old queries as to *Ding-an-Sich*, Being, or Substance. This just means activity which

carries its primal impulse in its own bosom. To-day, as in the days of Aristotle, metaphysics has to do with reality, taken in whole, inquiring into the principles of all "reality." Its central task is to determine the principles of "substance." For the notion of substance as "a sort of Kantian *Ding-an-sich*" is one from which we simply cannot get away. Not Kant alone, but also Fichte, Schopenhauer, and Hartmann, each in his own way, had some sense of the implied truth, which is simply that of the indissoluble connection of the inner actual self with the exterior and essential. This notion of substance is simply fundamental in our cognitive experience. It springs up in experience every time my self-activity is inhibited by anything whatsoever. It is but the inevitable making real of that which I must so interpret in terms of my real self. It is thus an ultimate in experience, beyond or behind which you cannot go. And when thought passes up to higher matters, leaving particular existences behind, there too one may find place and room for the notion of substance in a conception of the World-Ground so sought. Thus the "Aristotelian" doctrine of substance as a self-active principle, though not without its shortcomings, is a really philosophical one. It is what both Descartes and Spinoza missed, and what Leibniz was quick to perceive, when he sought to restore dynamic categories for the static relations in which these thinkers had left matters. In certain ways we can retain the notion of substance, rather than flux or stream of being, while, at the same time, we avoid the Spinozan conception of its kaleidoscopically

changing performances, which yet could not prove ground of a real and advancing development. The substance concept is a logical category. The substance category is connected with the element of identity in difference—an element present as an operative condition in perceptual consciousness. It is the permanent element amid the variables that metaphysical thought is concerned to seek. But the trouble is, that such a permanent and indeterminate substratum, as this conception of substance implies, does not seem able to account for determinate laws of change, as we find them. Metaphysics finds permanent possibilities of particular modes of perceptual experience; and it seeks, as the substance of phenomena, the persistent in phenomena, said persistent being the subject of judgments of experience. In the case of the external world, matter and force are, of course, the substance of experience: in the world of inner experience, the substance for thought consists in the simple self-consistent form of the ego. Now, it must be said that, in both cases, the absolutely constant in the midst of change is so difficult of attainment that the substance conception seems to drive us on always more towards the category of causation. For if, as metaphysics now seems best advised to do, we take things that exist by themselves as substances—that is to say, determinate substances or things—then the causality concept is at once brought into requisition, and it is found that there can be no substantiality without causality. Both these categories, the one of the persistence of substance, and the other of the persistence of causality,

take their rise, as logical conditions of experience, from the one severe and lofty principle of the unity and persistence of consciousness. In the absence of anything like perfect continuity of perceptions, the continuous connection between phenomena obviously cannot be perceived. Hence the unity of thought has to be taken as basal presupposition of all science and all experience. But these concepts of substance and causality logically correspond with the ideas of unity and multiplicity, respectively; the substance concept, in its stress on unity, gives birth to systems of being; the causality concept, in its emphasis on the multifarious forms and factors of development, gives rise to systems of becoming. But neither stationariness, on the one hand, nor mere flux, on the other, can be anything but absurd, if predicated of reality. The energy of Deity was, in Aristotle's view, without movement or friction—an activity changeless and eternal, to whose functionings of the Divinely substantial Being, he applied the term *ἐνέργεια ἀκινήσιας*. The permanence of substance amidst all changes is taken as a scientific postulate, for this permanence of substance, as an universal truth, is a conception with which the scientific mind simply cannot dispense. Substance, as we have seen, is that, whether person or thing, whose substantiality consists in being real, real as permanent element amid variables. This element of permanence, however true and real, must not be regarded, in the case of specific substances, as being so much of the essence of substance, as it has been by Kant, Green, and others; but it may greatly help

make substance a reality known to us, and is not unimportant. On the question of general substance, we must still hold to the merit of Kant's emphasis on substance as providing a necessary element of permanence and self-reference in our experience. For a substance is known as a substance by the way in which it resists and persists. It is a substance in that it exists by itself, and does not inhere in anything else. The substance category has survived every metaphysical attack in a way which proves something to be ineradicably planted in our cognitive being or experience of a kind that is met and described by the term substance. The fact is here its own ground: mere "groundedness" is absent; the character of *essentiality* is what makes the concept of substance. Everything which is real is a substance, possessed of attributes: everything which men call phenomenal has a ground in some substance or thing-in-itself. Every concrete existence or reality is possessed of qualities into which it is resolvable, and which constitute, or, as it is said, inhere in, its substance. There is but one substance, in the sense of complete independence; substance, in its most generic concept, is to be taken as real. This, although substance has, in metaphysics, always been non-perceptible. The notion of substance is psychological, that is to say, volitional in its origin. Cause, of volitional categories, is genetically prior to it. A particular feature of the resistance of things experienced in cause is their persistence. From such persistence springs our experience of substance. Even experience of re-

sistance—that most important of qualities—gives rise to the substance notion—for resistance is itself energy—as our conscious self-activity becomes inhibited and arrested by other agencies or activities. It was, therefore, a right instinct that guided Hume fundamentally to oppose the theory of the persistence of things, in his doctrine of substance. So much may be pertinently remarked, though we cannot here enter upon the details of Hume's work. The persistence of mass, and the permanence of atoms, in the case of material substances, can be so little separated from the changeful aspects or elements, that we seem to have but little left save permanent possibilities of certain modes of experience. We can, however, reach, by metaphysical abstraction, a notion of substance accordant with that which is fundamentally present in modern physics, as reducible to persistent forms of energy. The core of such substance is just a dimensionless centre or point for the forth-putting of such persistent energy. Of this conception of substance as energy, Prof. Ostwald says—on purely scientific grounds—that we see in energy a real existence, not merely a mathematical abstraction; that matter is, indeed, nothing but a system of energies, which are reciprocally proportional; and that matter more and more vanishes behind energy, which has assumed absolute and unwonted primacy. This, it may be remarked, is reflective matter that may fitly be added to the teachings of Mayer, Helmholtz, Joule, Faraday, Kelvin, and others, about all forces or natural energies being one force. I am aware, of



course, that attempt has been made to controvert it by A. E. Haas (*Zeitschrift für Philosophie*, 1908). If energy is, as with Ostwald, the sole substance of the universe, then it would seem that mind and matter, as found united in us, must be but different forms of this one substance. For such energy as substance cannot be thought of without reason as its essence or all-determining form. Energy, then, let us add, reft of reason, as in empiricism, evaporates into mere abstraction; and just as surely does reason do so, where shorn of all energy, as in pure rationalism. In reference to what has already been said, moreover, experience may yet shew us that every true empirical substance is, really, not just the perceptive whole of its qualities, but involves an element of substantiality beyond. Experience shews us that, in analysing such a substance, we are dealing with something that occurs in our consciousness, and has its factors there, so that our view of the world is modified by this metaphysical reflection. Our notion of substance, then, is that it is due to the activity of an object given us in sense-perception—an activity independent and causal in its working. This self-asserting individuality of substance is that which has been most emphatically insisted upon by realistic philosophers. Substantiality is thus, so to speak, an objective implication of our experience—our, in this connection, object-subject experience. Hence the claim of science—which it would be hard not to concede—to have established an objective synthesis of cosmical relations, whose existence does not depend simply on

human perception. It would be a serious issue to reduce all scientific knowledge to such purely subjective representation as would exclude the possibility of our really knowing the external world. But substance, for all that we have now said, is to be sought, not only in the changing continuum of sense, but also in the self—the self in its central and causal activity. For the self-active mind, or unitary being called the self, persists as subject amid the changing states of consciousness, and, in this unity of the self, attests itself as substantial being behind all these activities. Such substantial being is permanent ground of the changeful life of sense. Our Whole knowledge of reality implicates the substantiality of the objects so known in experience. The whole system of objects, whether persons or things, must be related substantially, or, in other words, grounded in real being. This is the basis of knowledge—the basis of science and philosophy, which are thereby made possible to us. This objectivism has the more need to be kept in view and place, when, from the metaphysical side itself, insistence is sometimes made on the permanence, singularity, and activity of substance, as attributes of substance due simply to man's projection of his own perduring, unified, and active self. In other words, the substance concept is thus accused of being really anthropomorphic. But an unconditioned knowledge is certainly impossible, and the world known by us may still be an honest world. It would not greatly advantage us simply, with Augustine, to set God above the category of substance, as contradictory—substance being

that in which something inheres—to the simplicity of the Divine Nature, and to view His changeless and incorporeal essence as transcending all forms of relation [*De Trinitate*, VII, and VIII]. Or, like Dionysius the Areopagite—who was mainly inspired by Proclus—to affirm substantial Being in Deity, and yet set Him above all substance and all thought. But Anselm, too, held God as transcending substance. For substance has accidents, and in God is nothing accidental. Anselm nevertheless thinks “substance” the best term—such as it is—to apply to God—*si quid digne dici potest*. Abelard, spite of certain conspicuous merits in this connection, was yet without a clear knowledge of the ground that impels to the calling of God substance. But the real and permanent core of reality, which we call substance, is not easily related to the world of change—as Source of all its changing manifestations. Still, our knowledge is of the objective—the real; and knowledge is always of that which transcends what is given in mere sense-perception. Knowledge of substance is through its attributes or predicable qualities: there is for us no knowing substance without knowing quality: the substance so known is *that which* underlies or binds substance and attributes together. Our knowledge of substance is thus not of substance *per se*, as contrasted with its attributes. But if we make substance merely a unity of the qualities, we have then gotten only a bare, abstract unity, which cannot help us in any concrete fashion. What philosophy, on its psychological basis or aspect, has always been seeking,

under this guise of an underlying substratum or substance, has really been agency—agency or energy that might help explain the activities of rational conscious beings. The essentials of volitional agency, it must be said, are clearly discernible in those persistent and self-assertive qualities which are characteristic of all substance. But the trouble with the substance conception is, that it appears to make of reality something fixed and static, and removes the essence of things far from the reach of our knowledge. It was the merit of Hegel to shew how futile is the search for the essence of reality in partial categories like substance or matter or force, and to lead thought up to self-conscious experience as highest category. This we say, although his philosophy is quite inadequate as a Science of the universe, since it does no manner of justice to those great tracts of reality which are known to exist, though they be not present in our experience. The difficulty of knowing what substance really is—of finding out its nature—was already felt by Locke. But Locke held to the reality of substance as a generic conception, such substance being, for him, known as a substratum. Certainly, if we think of substance as existing apart from, or independently of, its qualities, we can never know it. But, even so, the underlying reality or substance forms the principle of unity alike for the world without and the world within—for matter and for mind. For there is no reason why they should not both be grounded in one reality or substance. But the trouble is, how to

relate this ultimate reality—distinct from its attributes—to the world of finiteness, change, transience, which it somehow conditions. For these two—the noumenal and the phenomenal—are inseparable; the latter depends upon the former, all appearance being of that which exists and is intelligible. This intelligibility of the universe is the corner-stone of all scientific thought and inquiry, and there can be no true philosophy of science which does not do justice to it. We cannot have things without relations, any more than we can have relations without things. Relations are the only thing that is intelligible, but the relations must be orderly—those of a cosmos. The imperious demand of science is for an objective and intelligible relational constitution of Nature, as science is called, to observe and study her order. All phenomena must inhere in substance or noumenal being as their ultimate ground; and only as effects, or expressions, or manifestations of such substance or being are they in any way explicable. Their changes cannot be absolutely ultimate facts, as they would then be without relation to noumenal or substantial being. But the real and the apparent are always correlative, are mutually related, and necessarily implicate each other. The real and the phenomenal are, indeed, just the terms in which all human knowledge must be described; and the real is not to be sought as behind the appearances, but as revealed in them—that is to say, in human experience. Those qualities, which inhere in a substance, and do not exist by themselves, are metaphysically regarded as its accidents. Substance

is *per se*: accident is *in altero*. Substance is that which is: accident is that which modifies substance. To the Scholastic philosophy, the relation of the accidents proved very troublesome. For, while the accidents were predicated of the substances, they yet seemed to be really in them. There was Gilbert *de la Porrée*, for example, who deserves more attention in the present connection than he ever gets. Under the influence of Abelard, appear in Gilbert beginnings of the separation from each other of different significations that had gathered around the concept of substance. Gilbert seeks to make his twofold distinction of substances clear by the following concepts: (1) *quo est* or *subsistentia*, and (2) *quod est* or *subsistens*. The *quod est* is the equivalent of the old Aristotelian τὸ τί ἐστίν, and is therefore meant to denote the *what*, or thing itself, as distinguished from the *how*, the quality or form. On the other hand, the subsistence is not used to signify a substantial thing, but a substantial form. A true substance it thus is, being indeed the presupposition of the concrete things. Thus *quo est* comes to mean the whereby and wherefore the thing is—the essential, that is to say, in Aristotle's sense of the form of things. True substance had no need of form, being, in fact, itself form. Gilbert thus found himself able to pass from speaking of "substance" to the use of the term "subsistence," without the essence being defined with sufficient exactitude. God alone was to Gilbert true substance, as pure form without matter, all other substantial forms existing in God, and deriving their independence

and perpetuity from Him. In the primal Divine substance are no accidents, God being, to Gilbert, as the purest Idea, simple and abstract—pure all-embracing Being, without quality. Never before Gilbert *de la Porrée* had any distinction been made or attempted, whereby things should become recognised as substances in another way from that of being individual things. Things, *res*, realities, they had been, but not substances, specifically so called in a second sense. Gilbert did not, however, realise either the epoch-making importance or the proper application of the distinction he had made.

Another example of the Scholastic treatment of substance is the perfectly neglected but suggestive handling of Albertus Magnus. He deals with it in threefold manner. First he takes substance to denote the first and chief division of reality—the primal cause of all other existents. 'Tis an all-existing essence, out of which things spring, and without which they were not. It is pure and simple being: such being is true, and a necessity of thought. In Albert's second use of the term Substance, it becomes the first of predicables, including, as such, the highest sort or species of things, taken in a collective sense outside of God. Substance, in this view, is the common substrate of all forms, not to be confounded with matter itself. 'Tis that which represents, in all things outside of God, the office of the form-receiving, individualising principle. There is, however, a certain lack of clearness in his detailed treatment of it as the principle of individuation, due to his dealing with something

as substance which does not separately exist, but is only a principle for self-subsistence. The third Albertinian sense of the substance concept makes it the first subject. It is this alone which can properly be called subject, the individual thing—*hoc aliquid*—which is determinable as this or that essence by means of the limitations of space and matter. 'Tis of it all predicables or marks of essence may be affirmed, together with that first predicable of which we have already spoken. But to it also adhere contingent, individualising accidents or properties.

The whole Mediæval treatment of substance—which we cannot here pursue—is full of interest, as may be seen in the threefold treatment of Aquinas; the strange endeavour of that clear-sighted empiricist, Roger Bacon, to go back to the category of quantity; the doctrine of Duns Scotus that every substance is positive, as against the negative character of the *suppositum*, as matter; and the postulation by William Ockam that individual being is the true substance, and that no distinction exists between essence and existence. Resuming our own discussion of the subject, we remark that, of substance, in the concrete sense, the essential character is individuality. Every substantial being, therefore, is, as such, an individual essence or being. This individualistic character of the substance concept may be said to date from Leibniz, the Cartesian conception having been dominated by the idea of space. But it should, of course, be remembered that, up to the time of Abelard, the old Aristotelic conception of substance



had prevailed, whereby it signified that which exists separated from all other things, and cannot be regarded as predicate. Not content with the idea of substance merely as substrate of all determinations, Aristotle had defined substance as that which is separable (*χωρίστος*) from determinations such as those of quantity and quality. Substance, applied to actual things, had been, to Aristotle, not the pure form, but individual substance—the concrete individual. But such individual was to be taken as embodying, in his individuality, what is of the essence or type. The individual was, for Aristotle, the real, but the “form” was essential to such individual existence. By the dualism of Descartes, the monism of Spinoza, and the pluralism of Leibniz, substance was taken as independent being, of which these were ontological theories. Substance, then, as specific substance, is that which has a proper being of its own. It is this which forms the essential idea or notion of substance, and not any supposed connection with a substratum, with qualities distinct from it. The polemic of certain metaphysicians against the idea of a substratum seems to me rather overdone: not only is the substratum not disproved, but it may be more of a rational necessity to thought than is often supposed. More seems to me to depend on the way the substratum is conceived than is ever brought out. Dr James Ward, to take one instance, disbelieves in the substratum as “not an element in experience, whether individual or universal,” and as “simply a logical residuum,” answering to “nothing real.” But for the world of determinate things he postulates “a

Supreme Principle" that "maintains them all." Is not such a sustaining principle—non-spatial and non-perceptible—a substratum? Is it not the only substratum worth contending for? But is "universal" experience ours, whereby to know it? Must "individual" experience be taken in so cramped and positivistic sense that we can know nothing—not even as a necessity to thought? For, is not this supreme underlying principle the Ground of the possibility of all things? Substance is made distinct matter of experience by Lotze, who emphasises the aspect of the self as subject in our knowledge of substance, which last term is rather ill defined in his treatment. Lotze has not a little to say about an infinite substance, which encloses all things, and in which every event has its ground. Spinoza had treated individual beings as only modifications of the one Being; Lotze makes them, without doubt, appurtenances of the Absolute, but also holds them to have being for themselves. The reality of individual being consists, for Lotze, in its so being something for itself. The much-canvassed question as to whether Lotze must be taken as monist or pluralist is really wide of the mark: his aim is a higher point of view, in which monism and pluralism shall be harmonised, a resolute monism representing, meanwhile, his conviction. But it is not a monism, which he has thought out to the end, and so he has not shewn how it is that finite beings, as parts of the Absolute, come to cherish the illusory notion of their own action and self-consciousness—of an activity which is their own. It is clear that the infinite substance is

conceived as in constant change, every phase of this change expressing, in some appropriate way, the idea of the whole. In respect of the nature of the infinite substance, Lotze's fundamental intuition is, as becomes his spiritualistic standpoint, that of the spirituality of the infinite substance. The character of this spirituality is consequent upon the principle of the world's unity: Lotze declares the infinite substance to be world-idea or animating soul of world-culture. These positions, however, seem to leave the spirituality of the Absolute in too indeterminate a form; and not out of any means of its own can metaphysics clearly construe, and decisively affirm, the infinite substance as highest essence or being. Metaphysics can certainly go no further than the adoption of an all-embracing spiritual being or essence; and Lotze's basal insistence is, that the world is a unity, with one sole Being conditioning and enclosing all other being. It really seems to come to this, that the world and the Absolute are, to Lotze, the same, and between them must no separation be made. Lotze will not have the Absolute spoken of as a power controlling finite things. And so it comes, that, not only do finite things exist only in and of the Absolute, as their primal ground, but also the Absolute has His exclusive state only in and through them. When we speak of the world, we mean the manifoldness of appearances; when we speak of the Absolute, we denote the content of said world as spiritual unity; but it is one and the same substance that we are speaking of under the terms "world" and "Absolute."

Spinoza at first developed his notion of the substance concept too negatively, as that which is in itself, and is conceived through itself, or independently of any other conception; clearly a conception falling short of the multiplicity and rich determinativeness of the world of becoming. The causal treatment of reality, however, led Spinoza to do better in his theory of *causa sui* or self-activity, for the doctrine of self-active mind brings us to the realm of teleological experience. Thus it might be said, on the most favourable view, that Spinoza transcended the category of substance, making God no mere foundation of all things, but a true subject, loving Himself with the Spinozan intellectual love. When we come to Kant, we find his *Hauptgedanke* or main thought to be the vindication of the categories for self-consciousness as the subjective ego. In Kant the substance is what, as substrate, remains the same in all change. The substance notion began, in Kant, to shape itself in the guise of a subject-activity—even with him, we say, however imperfectly or unconsciously, the substance notion was passing away from the idea of mere dead substrate into the conception of a living subject. He it was who laid an epistemological basis for the substance doctrine, even though the substance category was not, for him, essential to an object's absolute existence, but remained merely a form of our representation of objects. Kant helped us see the substance notion to be a vital element of existence; he shewed how metaphysically unfruitful was the tendency to treat thing and property in independence, though he did not himself triumph

over that tendency; he tried to make substance—and a perfectly new thing it was—one of the constitutive elements of experience; and, if he carried his work here only half through, we can still be thankful that he claimed as much for experience as he did. This, all the more, since, as we have seen, Locke, who started from the Cartesian dualism as to substance, never really reached, for all his empiricism, a proper definition of substance. As for Malebranche, he had incorporated himself with the Divine substance, unheeding any pantheistic dissipation of human personality; while Berkeley, laying hold of the principles of causality and substance, inferred the existence of God from the former, and the substantiality of soul from the latter. But of the two substances—the finite and the Infinite Spirit—in relation, Berkeley could give no satisfactory and self-consistent account. Either we are self-active spirits or substances, with an independence of God, or we are dependent upon Him, in which case we finite beings have no title to the name of substance. This would bring Berkeley near to the “modes” of Spinoza, as Leibniz was by the dependence of his “monads” upon God. Kant, in opposing Berkeley’s identification of being and the perceptions of being, treated substance as merely the permanence (*Beharrlichkeit*) of the thing in the form of time. But Kant properly declined to identify himself with Fichte’s idealism in holding that there is only one substance in the universe—that of the ego. For the transcendental object, which might be for him only a *nescio quid*, was yet substantial enough to be the

basis of all phenomena. Still, Kant's treatment of the substance concept was not very clear or satisfactory, in the way he made it—now the *Beharrliche*, now matter, now subject, and finally, an universal something.

Hegel was a huge borrower, albeit his borrowing was, of course, that of genius, and it is scarcely possible to praise too highly what he did for the categories. Substance was, for him, the absolute form-category. In the realm of actuality—than which metaphysics has, for him, no higher category—Hegel finds the three moments of substance, cause, and reciprocity. In the first of these, substance, with which we are here concerned, the underlying potentiality is such as to dominate reality, for there is, in truth, such freedom from the merely potential that the necessity latent in substantial being naturally rules contingent elements or factors. For his substance, Hegel took from Spinoza the principle of its absolute monism, from Leibniz the principle of free development as its absolute process, and from Kant the principle of its absolute essence as subject or spirit. Whereas a substantial material basis had been taken to be necessary, Hegel held logical reason itself to be the truly substantial—the substantive, coherent, and concrete unity of all the abstract elements. But reason is *Geist*—a spiritual reason that has understanding. For reason without understanding is, to Hegel, nothing. The march of Hegel's thought is from substance to subject; the living subject is, to Hegel, that existence which is, in truth, subject; and, this subject or ego developing its

own categories, these become, in due course, externalised. Thus his self-actualising universal, Thought, became constituted, with its own amazingly interesting immanent intellectual dialectic, but with a fatal, one-sided neglect of *Erfahrung*. When it comes to the Absolute Spirit, however, Hegel has the merit to make it a person (*einer*), not a substance (*eines*). For the final substance, to him, is that Spirit Who is the one, living, self-existent, all-embracing Personality.

To-day we have those who tell us that an intellectualist world-view gives us only a static and untenable universe. Change is for them so important a thing—the time-process so superior a thing—that Deity must be affected by change, and be subject to time, as the Absolute certainly should not be. What is time, that He should not be its founder and its seat, rather than its serf? Time is not independent of God, nor is God dependent upon time. Time is certainly not the form of God's life, His eternity just meaning freedom from time. Eternity, absolutely taken, is incommensurable with time; as the great Aquinas said, *non sunt mensuræ unius generis*; for eternity would lose its character as eternal in the very entering into relations with the changeful or becoming. Both Neo-Kantian and Neo-Hegelian thinkers have shewn a general tendency to regard time-conceptions as unfit, in metaphysics, for the ultimate explanation of the universe. But if time be taken as unreal, then eternity must not be taken as future, in Dr M'Taggart's fashion. For nothing properly could, in that case, be future, and eternity could not be said to begin, as is often

done in everyday life. Time is, in our view, purely relative, which eternity is not. Time is neither a substance, nor yet Kant's mere subjective form of sense-perception; it is the universal correlate of finite being. No distinctions of before and after are admissible in the eternity conception, hence we have no right to speak of time as a portion of eternity. To make of eternity only a blank and irrelevant negation of temporality would not satisfy any sort of ontology: it is to be taken, positively, as the mode of the timeless self-existence of the Absolute Ground of the universe. Eternity must not be defined in terms of time at all: infinite time is a self-contradictory conception. We are not entitled to say, with Royce, that the wholeness or totality of the temporal constitutes the eternal, for the eternal belongs to quite another order—that of timeless reality. Eternity, objectively considered, might be said to be a mode of being of God in relation to Himself. For He was eternal, while as yet the world and time were not. Why should the world be held a useless and irrational thing—why should things be taken not really to happen, or count for anything—because the Absolute Being, raised above succession and change, exists to make the change and flux intelligible to us, and to render the happenings furtherings of His will—not mere figurings of the creature? Time and the creature must both remain relative, if we are to escape the glaring absurdity and manifest self-contradiction of an Absolute creating other absolutes outside of itself. The Absolute may, I think, be supposed to know its



own business sufficiently well to think such relative beings or existences better than entire non-being. For the relative is still real, and not a mere *Schein* of the Absolute. We are entirely without warrant for foisting upon the Absolute an arbitrary self-restraint in making the world one wherein finitude and relativity prevail, when more rational and necessary grounds of His action are quite available. A changeful, impressionable, finite Deity is a type of which we are not greatly enamoured, since He is so much what the virtues and condescensions of men have made Him, not the ethically immutable Being we have taken Him to be. Nevertheless, the universe is not static, but a developing world, time and its diversities existing for the real and progressive purposes of the Absolute Being Who is its Life. Nor is the supra-temporal *ens perfectissimum* One Whose timeless self-sufficiency and impassible aloofness are to be taken as of a kind to keep Him from being strength and helper of our temporal striving. Our activity can never be useless, while it brings an ever-increasing enrichment of the Spirit, as, leaving our lower and less developed self behind, we enter into the freedom and fellowship of the life of God. The substantiality, denied to this mind or self as pure ego by Hume and Spencer, is merely a rejection by thinkers whose views do obviously not transcend the phenomenal plane. And what better can be said of Mill, who, with a desperate consistency, holds the material world to be a permanent possibility of sensation, and resolves our idea of substance, by what he deems conclusive psychological

analysis, into a tendency to mistake mental abstractions, even negative ones, for substantive realities? Scarcely more satisfying is the position of those thinkers to-day for whom the self or ego is only a bare abstract unity of man's attributes and functions. Hartmann grounded the necessity for a permanent, unchangeable, non-spatial, supra-temporal, substance, upon the fact of change, while Schopenhauer made such change depend upon substance as its unchangeable substratum—matter. To Schopenhauer the law of causality holds not for substances themselves, but only for phenomena. To the critical realism of Wundt—with its psychological rather than ontological character—substance is the concept which springs from the attribute of permanence, and the underlying substratum of things is being, unchanging and absolute. But the substance concept does not receive great metaphysical justice from Wundt. He, rightly enough, takes substance to be the result of reflection. He does not allow it to be an original concept, but takes it as ground of experience, and with a purely logical import. But, in the inter-relations or inter-actions between object and mind, Wundt does not seem to do justice to the part played by the activity of the object, wherein substantiality appears related to our sensuous cognitions as well as to reflection. He objects to the substance concept being applied to inner experience, as it is applied to things empirically given, not perceiving what a really interior origin the concept of substance has, as immediate apprehension which the percipient has of himself and his own modifications. Substance

and cause are, for Wundt, elements which must not be separated: substance is constant, being unchangeable in amount: change gives rise to the concept of causal activity, but substance is the source of the activity of change. An original, constant, and fundamental attribute of substance, to Wundt, is force. Of such force energy is, to him, simply the product. Energy, he expressly maintains, must, just as well as force, have a position in objective space, and indeed he ultimately transfers to the causal concept a good deal of what was originally attributed to substance. Ward takes that which occupies space to be, psychologically, the substantial, the other real constituents being but its properties or attributes. But this seems a rather ponderous mode of conceiving substance. Our awareness of the object only needs that substance be held to reveal itself in the relation actively subsisting between the object as a real existence and the percipient mind. James gives what he calls the provisional name of substance to that something in a phenomenon which is more than the phenomenon. But what does this "more" signify, if there is not implied in it a certain causal reality in the object actively present or operative in the mind's correlative working? And what a lowering of man's higher nature and aspirations to say, with James, that "I am finite once for all," that "all the categories of my sympathy are knit" with "the finite world," and that "the stagnant (!) felicity of the Absolute's own perfection" moves me not? If this were all, the "flower in the crannied wall" would run up into higher relations with the Infinite than

man, whose boast has been to be partaker of the Divine or Infinite nature.

In view of all that has been advanced, we take the conception of substance to be that of an absolute form-concept—the absolute self-determining activity, in fact, and foundational in importance for metaphysics. So far, indeed, has it been from the superfluous thing which Hume supposed. We have seen the yielding of the substance category to that of spirit, the replacement of the substance conception by that of the subject, and the discovery of a real Absolute, Whom, as externalised, we know as existential counterpart of the unity of experience. The spiritualistic monism so reached is one which the category of substance—the substantial or the real—has helped us see to be no mere unification, in an abstract entity, of the manifold forces and disconnected elements involved. But the substance concept is most really known by us as related to, and in a sense one with, the concept of First Cause, which will be among the subjects treated of in next chapter. In the substance concept, no doubt, we look off from the actual working—we abstract, indeed, from the active First Cause—and fix attention on the inner point of unity in the working. But such an inner point of view is, at the same time, starting-point for the outworking of an active First Cause.

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## CHAPTER III.

THE METAPHYSICS OF CAUSE, FIRST CAUSE, AND  
WORLD-GROUND.

THE fundamental tendency of metaphysics is towards setting forth the likeness or equality in essence of God and the world, for only thus can it hope to make the relations of causality between these two factors comprehensible. The peculiar presupposition of metaphysics we have already declared to be just the homogeneity of God and the world, without which, indeed, metaphysic would, from the outset, be meaningless. Every cause is a cause of a particular effect only within the determinate connection and sphere, in which they both lie enclosed. This homogeneity of cause and effect it is impossible for metaphysics to overlook, while avoiding the mistake sometimes made, in name of theology, of saying that the cause must resemble the effect. 'Tis of the essence of causation that there should be difference of form in the effect—cause would not be cause if it did not produce something new or different. We have thus before us the complexity of the category of cause and effect, with the difficulty of saying wherein

the efficiency of causation exists, and of what sort is transeunt causal action. In it, indeed, we have the last of the great categories to attain to full and real definiteness, although the search for cause is begun before the quest for substance. This category of cause and effect is one whose conditions are, Time, Space, and Agents, which last are to be taken in a material sense. For the category, strictly taken, is a physical one. But, in general usage, it is viewed in a much wider sense.

It will be seen, then, that the term *cause* is to be taken as involving the effect, and that the terms, *cause* and *effect*, are essentially correlative. Cause is transcendental, belongs to all true being. Every real entity is a cause, and every entity—the First Cause alone excepted—is also an effect. It is with the conception of *efficient* cause that we are here concerned, and that conception implies an Agent which is possessor or vehicle of force, activity, or power. The efficient cause is outside of the effect, while it really contributes to its production. Indeed, to make a thing or effect *actual* is the very end and function of an efficient cause. The notion of *cause* must not, for all that has now been said, be confounded with that of *being*, of which—as naked or empty being—it forms no essential part. *Cause* is transitive, and strictly relative, connoting an effect distinct from itself. Philosophically to define *cause* is matter of proverbial difficulty, but the best idea is probably that of *producing*, wherein something real passes from the efficient cause into the entity of the effect. Indeed, the cause passes into the effect, which latter



stands over against it; this, in virtue of the causal relation being one in which the same fact appears, now as cause, and now as effect. The existence of the causal link is a fact we perceive, and yet it does not admit of demonstration. Therein lies the trouble; it is seen by reflection, rather than established by argument. To ask for proof of a first principle is absurd. Minds so different as those of Kant and Spencer have taken causality to be such a principle. The causal concept becomes doubly difficult when the efficient causality has relation to spiritual beings, the First Cause being thus the supremely difficult instance. Cause, strictly taken, may be defined in such ways as the following. Cause is something which makes not merely positive, but essential communication of being to some other entity. Or, it may be something which is a principle of change or determining influence to it. Or yet again, it may be that which produces an essence that is distinct from its own. Briefly put, the Cause makes an entity to be, which else were not. We have seen active power or force to be presupposed in the Cause. The Cause is thus independent of the effect, and, *qua* cause, is prior to it in respect of nature. It does not follow from this that causality need be successive in *time*, for cause and effect may be synchronous. The cause is but the logical *prius* of the effect. The latter may therefore follow the working of the former in a way that may be taken as timeless. Indeed, cause and effect, taken in their interconnection or interaction, become, in principle, simultaneous. It is quite another thing to describe

the precise nature of the causal influx from affirming the evident fact. The effects of causation are continually present in our own experience, and the need spontaneously arises to postulate some adequate Source or Ground of ourselves and the world. It should be noticed how large and impressive is the sway claimed for the category of causality, which has been taken to be, in its modifications or applications, inclusive of all categories of objectivity. The causal relation is universal, and causality the supreme category of natural science. Romanes and others have spoken of this universal fact of causation as, to them, the most wonderful fact of the universe. It will be seen, however, that we have been dealing with the metaphysical idea of cause, not with the scientific tendency to treat causes as mere antecedents. All science is based on the belief in invariable and orderly sequence. Real causes are unknown to science, which in reality deals only with *occasions*; causations are to science only transformations. It is, however, no impeachment of the causal principle that it has thus no place in the scientific realm, for efficiency preserves its validity and worth in its own proper, non-phenomenal sphere. In the phenomenal sphere, a First Cause would be inconceivable, no interruption of the sequence of equivalent changes being admissible. Scientific method, then, excludes all notion of a First Cause. If the intuition of causation seems to demand the postulation of a First Cause, the exigencies of science can meet this demand only by breaking away from its own method, which is confined to changes caused by forms of energy previously ex-

istent. With the scientific centres of such forms of force and energy, lying open to observation and experience, we have here nothing to do, save only in that important respect whereby the cosmical result, to which they unitedly give rise, is one which demands another, and deeper, kind of cause than any known to strict scientific method. That truer—and, indeed, only real—conception of Cause is Will. That deeper Cause, as Cause of all inferior or secondary causes, is the First Cause, to which, by the need for self-subsistent being or principle, we are ultimately, but nowise arbitrarily, driven. God, as First Cause, is Ground and Cause of all secondary beings or causes, without Whom these could not subsist or be. God is First Cause, all things craving His immediate causality. The quest for such First Cause is, we have seen, but an application to the world in whole, as a unity, of said law of causation. But the cause of the universe, as actually existing, can, *qua* cause, by no possibility exceed or transcend the effect—the universe itself. Because the effect so measures the cause, the universe as an effect can, in its finitude, not yield us the First Cause. Hence the chief defect in the presentation of the First Cause argument, especially in the hands of British and American philosophers and theologians, has been the frequent and persistent tendency to rest in what could be inferred from the law of causation, as applied to the phenomena of the universe, and the failure to pass, from the dependent or contingent character of these phenomena, to the postulation of an Absolute Ground. The argument is really drawn, as Leibniz properly

divined, from the contingency of the world, which reveals, in its dependence, a Primal Power, or Cause, on which it so depends. There is really no logical force in Rudolf Otto's objection to saying that, as every effect must have its cause, so must the world, taken as *an effect*, have its cause. The question is of the actual world, not a suppositious and necessary one. If the First Cause were finite, there would then be an Infinite Uncaused beyond it. If it were dependent, that on which it depended would then be the Absolute, and, as such, the First Cause. Belief in a First Cause rests on no foundation of authority, but is a necessity of thought, which, in its *ὄρεξις* or want, retrogressively impels to this quest, in view of the world's contingency.

In this connexion it is evident that the question sometimes asked,—What is the Cause of the First Cause? is perfectly meaningless, no kind of cause of God's existence being admissible. The reason for this will be yet more evident when we come to discuss a thinker like Descartes, but it may in the meantime be said that it is an inaccurate mode of speaking to say that God is cause of Himself. God is His own sufficient reason, and all that we can say is, that He is self-existent. Then the term *cause*, it must be remembered, is ambiguous in its use. A cause which is the physical correlative of a physical effect is quite another kind of cause than is a spirit or self, when spoken of as cause. Such a spirit or self is not a mere correlative. Still less can the Absolute Self—which the First Cause argument seeks—be regarded as a mere correlative. Throned above the whole

cosmos of experience, such Absolute Self is pre-condition and presupposition of everything else.

There is not only the difficulty of getting a First Cause, but of getting one that shall not be *so* efficient as to extinguish all other efficient causes. For the First Cause can only be taken as absolutely necessary, and sufficient, for all effects whatsoever. Such a position must not be deemed a purely hypothetical one; it was adopted and presented by that interesting but little known thinker, Nicholas de Ultricuria, who, so far back as the fourteenth century, held, under the influence of the ideas of Thomas Bradwardine, that all activities are due to the immediate action of the First Cause. Thus was the causality of the human will denied in ultra-Berkeleyan fashion. We have, then, to deal with the fact that the *prevenient* causality of the First Cause could dispense with all secondary causes, these latter belonging to an order that need not have existed. In view of this, all secondary efficient causes can be held to be so only in a conditional sense, as media through which efficiency passes.

The First Cause argument is properly, not an inference from effect to cause—since this would never take us beyond the really finite—but from effect to Ground. But, in the favourite form of seeking a First Cause, the argument has taken a Deistic character, with the need of showing that the world had a beginning, and the result of leaving the Divine relation one of pure transcendence. The issue for Theism could only be very partial and incomplete. The attempt in this connexion to think an absolute beginning, or First Cause of all things,

was a futile or impossible one, and was strangely unperceived to be so. In the long chain or process of cause and effect, the First Cause was antecedent of the process, without its being perceived that thus it really stood outside the process, the leap to it illegitimate. All change in concrete objects is prior to any specific consciousness of ours in cognizing the same. But this priority of things over our thought means that the time element cannot be set aside—as is vainly attempted—when we try to think an absolute beginning. The time element is essential to the content of our consciousness, and for the last concrete content, in our attempted absolute beginning, we should still be compelled to ask for a reason—a reason lying in time prior to our consciousness of said concrete content. Thought can neither deny its own essential character, nor the priority in existence of things over itself. In other forms of the argument, however, such as, from the contingent to the necessary, or the finite to the infinite, we do not escape the necessity for a leap at last, for the conclusion is infinite, which the data never can be. But the appeal may here be deeper, to the necessities of thought or reason.

We are not here concerned to shew, further than has been already made apparent, what a deepening of the conception of *substance* this whole argument involves. But neither cause nor substance, as here taken, supplies us with an absolute principle. This world of experience is not a perfect cosmos. It is not wholly rational and necessary, and so we must recognise the contingent. This contingent or dependent character of the world is evidenced in

Nature, both as unified whole, under the most complete generalisations known to science, and as viewed singly in any of its parts. There must be a sufficient reason for every existing thing, and for the universe in whole. Such reason our argument seeks. Everything is, in its turn, conditioned by something else, and is made what it is by its relations to other things. The number of its relations is indefinite, and the complete rationality of such relations, as a system, is past finding out. While an underlying *nexus* of force makes everything also casual in its turn, yet there is no trace of existence, independent and non-conditioned. We know limitation as surely as we know being. Parts of existential phenomena, everywhere throughout the universe, depend upon other parts not less dependent in their turn. Not a single casual agency, known to science, bears the stamp or mark of self-subsistence, and the same thing is true of our personal and finite existences. No aggregation of such finite agencies and existences can possibly make an independent and unconditioned universe. Clearly, a universe so finite and dependent must have its Cause or Ground beyond itself. In whole, it must have an independent, self-existent Cause, as necessary correlate of its finitude. Even by those who take the creation of matter to be eternal, such a World-Ground is felt to be necessary. For even then—and the same holds true if the world be but one of an endless series of universes—an eternal and unitary Ground and Cause is needful as explanation of the vast successions of phenomenal changes and dynamic

activities that make up the universe. Yes, needful as explanation of their persistence, no less than their production. Clearly, an adequate cause is required for the world's being eternal rather than of time. The eternity of the world is not synonymous with its necessity. Matter may very well be the eternal effect of an eternally producing Cause. Even if matter be taken as eternal, the question still remains whether it has in itself—or from without—the principle of its existence. The Cause or Ground is, in such case, related to no past creative activity, but is claimed as centre and soul of present cosmic reality. What, however, does exclude anything of the nature of real effective Causation is, a merely pantheistic evolution. What theistic philosophy does postulate is, that, in respect of all causational effects whatsoever, the First Cause was free in His self-action; that His activity in the use of causational power had no need to be eternal, however the power of such causative action might be eternal.

The more assured conclusions, and better established theories, of science, alike point to the finitude and dependence of the universe. But if we assumed no First Cause, as Source of transforming causal energy to the world, science itself would be reduced to illusion. For no link in the infinite chain of secondary causes would then originate, but only transmit, causality, and yet there would—the First Cause being wanting—be no causality to transmit. To deny a First Cause would be to deny all secondary causes and the reign of causation with-



in the sphere of experience. The need for a First Cause, in the sense of a self-moved Mover, has been felt, from Plato to Hegel and Martineau, and may, for all practical purposes, be taken as universally admitted. But the need is even more pressing for a First Cause which is present Ground and Cause of the whole concatenation of causes now at work in the ordered universe. Underlying all that has been advanced, is the principle that what does not exist as of absolute necessity is merely contingent, else there would be a violation of the principle of causality, and we should have existence without cause. The same violation would likewise result, if the cause were not adequate or proportionate. It may be here observed, that the argument, taken in the customary form as being from effect to cause, can infer existence of the First Cause, only in so far as it is a Cause; for the world, as an effect finite and conditioned, could never give a cause infinite and absolute. Cause and effect, as correlative, mutually limit each other. Hegel took this ground of arguing the impossibility of deducing an infinite cause from a finite effect, and Hume insisted that the cause must be proportioned to the effect. J. Caird maintained the cause to be as much conditioned by the effect as the effect by the cause. This reactionary influence of the effect upon the cause had been strongly brought out by Hegel in its significance as augmenting the importance of the effect. Indeed, to him every effect is, by necessary reaction, the cause of its cause. These considerations, interesting as they

are, do not invalidate the fact that the efficient cause is, in ordinary sense and usage, absolutely independent of the effect. An efficient cause may conceivably exist, as being or entity, without any effect. It would not then, of course, be First Efficient Cause, since nothing had been caused or created, but would be the absolutely necessary Being. Insistences like those of Hegel may, however, serve to shew the weakness of the argument to a First Cause in the customary form of inferring it from effect to cause. What it has always lacked, and still lacks, is some clear and valid explication of the sense in which an extra-mundane Power can be a cause. For the usual presentation makes the world, as created by the First Cause, something separate from, and outside of, the Creator. But, if outside of Him, then He is finite. And if the First Cause and the caused world be not so separated, then there is pantheism. We are not therefore driven, as Royce and others, to make the Creator or First Cause "identical with His products." There seems to the present writer nothing more fatuous in modern philosophy than this inability of Neo-Hegelian thinkers to grasp the really inspiring truth that Deity transcends His own works—as we transcend ours—while He immanently lives in them. The weakness in the whole case is escaped only by allowing the principle of causation, in its quest for an ultimate, to rest in an Absolute World-Ground. Otherwise, the principle of causation, taken strictly as such, can never conduct us from the world to God. For the argu-

ment therefrom is clearly one from the world as physical effect to a cause as physical correlative. But the whole force and value of the argument to a First Cause lie in another direction—in an ascent from the swift successions, and changeful phenomena, of nature in whole, to an ultimate and self-existent Ground and Cause, in which these all find possibility, reality, and permanent base or support. Strictly taken, our principle—that of Causality—does not undertake any categorical affirmation as to existence, either of its subject or predicate. It were content to affirm, conditionally, that if contingent being exists, its Efficient Cause must exist. But, inasmuch as the world is taken to exist as contingent being, it proceeds to set out its argument for said world's necessary and sufficient First Cause. So doing, it seeks not a mere foundation of Being in the abstract, but a real, actually existing, primitive Ground (*Urgrund*) of all reality. It could not possibly find satisfaction in any form of First Cause, whose relations to the world should be mainly antecedent to the world, or, for the most part, separate from it. It seeks, through all sequence and dependence of phenomena, some continuous and persistent dialectical cone of being, and rests not till it finds it in the *ens realissimum*—the Absolute Life.

There seems to be large ground of justification for saying that no more ancient attempts were made to prove, philosophically, the existence of the Supreme Being, than those which ran along the lines of cosmological argument, or cause and effect. From

the earliest times of speculation on the universe, the principle, *Ex nihilo nihil fit*, has been taken to be necessary and indisputable. And the principle, as Hamilton expounded it, is one which shews that the human mind cannot conceive an absolute beginning, but must think something as eternal. A Cause for the world was the first aim of Greek thought at its start, but the cause desired was not the god. Behind the fact (τὸ ὅτι), the Greek mind sought the cause (τὸ διότι). A First Cause gradually gave way to natural causes, as the philosophers emphasised the fixity and universality of natural law. In the naïve realism of the pre-Socratic philosophers, the causal idea was mainly represented by the word ἀρχή, as denoting something that had priority in time and was primal basis of all being. Strictly taken, the ἀρχή was neither the cause of the world nor its ultimate element, but the principle by which it might be rationally explained. It came at length to be almost the equivalent of the material cause of Aristotelian metaphysics. On examination of the available evidence, one can hardly conceive the notion or idea of divine force or cause *ab extra* to have been absent from the minds of such early philosophers as Thales, Anaximander, and Anaximenes (all of the Ionic School), who each and all postulated one primal and all-sufficient cause for the world, said cause—whether water, air, or infinite—being to them living, or animated matter. What the particular cause was, which they chose, does not really matter; the important thing is, that they made the great distinction between that which appears, and that

which does not appear. Things might be ever so different, but their *cause* was *one*. This primal cause or principle they shewed a disposition to exalt as Deity. Heraclitus, again, was in reality less concerned with the ἀρχή, as permanent substrate, than he was with the αἰτίον κινήσεως or cause of our multiple experience. Xenophanes, head of the Eleatic School, set forth his World-God—immovable and perfectly homogeneous—with a great lack of explication as to those causal issues that were raised by the Milesian philosophers. This is said without any lack of appreciation for the memorable monotheistic elements of the philosophic thought of Xenophanes. Anaxagoras does better, takes the νοῦς as the principle of animation, and makes it external motive-force for the world, which is supposed to be formed by motion. The force, which is the cause of this motion, is, with Anaxagoras, the νοῦς—to him signifying *reason* or *thought-stuff*, a corporeal element subtly diffused throughout the universe. This primary matter, set in motion by the Divine Mind, yields, in its rotatory movement, the world out of chaos. If the postulation of Efficient Cause by Anaxagoras was of a frigid sort, it was still real. The Pythagoreans sought the causal unity of the world in such general relations as number, proportion, etc., as forming the directive force of nature. The essence or ultimate basis of all things was, for the Pythagoreans, Number, for the thoughts of men had then turned from the origin of things to their being or essence.

Such, in briefest form, was the early Greek mode

of escape from the oppressive weight of the thought of the world's ceaseless flux—an escape that carries, as its dominant feature, the quest for some abiding Reality. It may be remarked, more generally, that the Greeks discerned relations of succession to be characteristic of causation, as we see in Plato and Aristotle, but not so clearly as to prevent the successiveness of relation from being confounded by them with the relation of substance and attribute. The relations of Plato and Aristotle to causality are not dealt with here, having been treated in a chapter of my volume of 'Studies in European Philosophy.' Passing over the striking anticipations of both Hume and Kant, on the question of causation, by Aenesidemus, the purely objective criticism of causation by Sextus Empiricus, and the supreme and unmeritorious abstraction of the unity of existence on the part of Plotinus, we are content to note that Diodorus of Tarsus made some advance in the line of the metaphysical. Change he held to imply beginning, and the unstable to point to origin, and such change and instability he found characteristic of all things in the world. But change requires an antecedent cause or effector. The unchangeable must, as First Cause, lie behind the series. And this unchangeable First Cause Diodorus takes to be a Supreme Personal Intelligence. John of Damascus, who may almost be credited with the first essay in synthetic philosophy, gave the *à posteriori* argument from effect to cause his support. But all through that early period, the developing power of an over-weighted transcendence is observ-

able. This transcendent and dualistic character of God's relation to the world, as its Cause, comes into full view in the thought of the Mediæval Period—a feature deepened by the great influence of the causal conceptions of the Arabic philosophers, Avicenna and others. There is something significant, however, in the fact that that Period closes with such an immediate knowledge of God as is claimed by the mysticism of Eckhart. The beginnings of Modern Philosophy, as found in Nicolaus of Cusa, and Taurellus—whom Leibniz held in high esteem—are interesting and suggestive, in respect of the treatment of causal conceptions. Present in the Cusan was a boldly pantheistic line of thought, in which the boundless character of the universe was proclaimed, no less than that of God, so that he became a precursor of Bruno and Leibniz. As for Bruno, whose causal treatment is marked by speculative force and freshness, the infinity of the world is the Nolan's great thought. Campanella, the distinguished Italian thinker, took up the First Cause conception from the hands of Nicolaus of Cusa, and dealt with it in finely independent manner. The eclectic Spanish thinker, Suarez, subtly dealt with cause and effect, taking a strong view of the efficient causality of God as First Cause.

But the rise of modern science had its effect upon the treatment of the causal problem. It ought to be better understood than it is, that the real foundation of modern science lay in the reduction, to more determinate modes, of the principle of universal causality. The substitution of the causal conception, as applied

to the phenomena of nature, instead of the mediæval resort to teleological modes of view, must be held an important change. To Bacon, the thing of chief import was the study of *causæ efficientes*. Galileo—as is so often overlooked—did much for the idea of *cause*, long before the time of Hume, giving it a new significance. Causes he no more made, scholastic-wise, *substances*, but *states*—causes and effects alike being to him *motions* of substances. Descartes, influenced by scholastic realism, accepted the distinction of *res extensæ* and *res cogitantes*—making all things spatial or conscious—and fell back upon the category of causality, with the externality of relation it involved. But Descartes was very far from clearly perceiving the relations of substance and cause: in fact, he strangely confounded the relation of cause and effect with that subsisting between substance and attribute. 'Twas in this connexion he furnished the germs of Spinozan thought. A substance is manifested in its attributes as phenomena, but, as their substratum, is yet really independent of them. The relation between them is unchanging. But, in the case of cause and effect, the effect only begins to exist with change or event, and does not exist only in and through the cause, but as something produced by it. Consequently, Descartes could do no manner of justice to transeunt cause, however he might appreciate cause as immanent. He uses the old Scholastic distinction of cause *secundum fieri*, which does not designate creation proper, and cause *secundum esse*, which really creates, and constitutes the relation of God to the universe. God is con-



ceived by Descartes as the Cause of our idea of Him, being Himself the Author of this idea. Thus it is by means of the axiom of causality that the idea of God is reached by him. This, it should be observed, is so in such wise as not to leave God such a purely objective existence for us, as many of his expositors have supposed. The idea of God is, to Descartes, innate only in the sense that our awakening powers of themselves comprehend the idea—not in the sense that it is *given* from the first: God is, to Descartes, not provable from the world of experience. We are not to confound, as is often done, our inability to follow the infinite chain of causes with the need to posit a First Cause. The relation of First Cause is held by Descartes as equivalent to that of Ground and Consequence, but in such wise that we are left with the sole concept of dependence. He represents that rationalistic conception of cause, which prevailed at the opening of modern philosophy. This view of the causal sequence took the effect to follow from the cause as of necessity—it was deducible therefrom apart from experience. It should be remembered how *à priori* and unscientific was the thought of Descartes, in whose system was nothing Baconian: effects were deduced from known causes rather than *vice versâ*. The Scholastics had, in their speculative search for a concept that should express the connexion between cause and effect, bequeathed the axiom,—*Cessante causâ, cessat effectus*. Descartes had allowed himself to be influenced by the rationalistic theory of knowledge, which took the connexion of ideas to be the

same as the connexion of things—the inseparable in thought to be inseparable in the real. Hence the implicit Occasionalism of his metaphysics leads him to have recourse to the will of God for explanation of the world's concrete content, because of this certain knowledge that finite phenomena must depend on what is outside the known world of mind and matter. Descartes' outstanding conception of First Cause is the thought of the transcendent Causality, on which depend our representations of external things. But he does not set out the kind of connexion here involved with sufficient clearness, and his position grows really comprehensible only as thought widens out to the universal concept of causality. Descartes never succeeds in reducing the connexion subsisting between outer and inner event to a clear concept. Omitting all reference to Geulincx, Malebranche, Joseph Glanvil—precursor of Hume—Fénélon, and Bossuet, we find Cartesianism at its height in Spinoza. In Spinoza's metaphysic we find the rationalistic conception of the causal sequence in its most developed and logically consistent form. Every causal relation is to him the equivalent of a logical consequence. An immanent causal relation is a basal conception to Spinoza. His *natura naturans* is efficacious Cause of the endless modifications it brings forth, cause and effect being here substantially identical. The effect but reveals the nature of the cause. The series of finite things or events being Endless, there is, for Spinoza, no First or Ultimate Cause in the world of phenomena: finite causes are all of them second causes:

God Himself is the primary or First Cause, and His sphere is the infinite. The truth is, the causal relation is really another thing to Spinoza than it was to Geulincx and Malebranche, for to them God is Creator, Who forms the world by His will, whereas to Spinoza God is but the universal nature or essence of things, from Whose nature the world follows as of necessity. Thus we find not here the same idea of a *producing* cause, which was so prominent a feature of Occasionalism. God is here the "First Cause" immanent in the universe, to which self-manifestation is essential: God is *natura naturans*, and the numberless worlds form *natura naturata*. Spinoza's position as to a sufficing Ground enables him to find a merely logical setting for his universalised laws of nature—an advance on the metaphysical grounding of Descartes. Causation may, no doubt, be taken to be the fundamental concept of Spinoza's philosophy. But this is much less correct in the case of Spinoza, than in that of Bruno, whose fundamental element was causality as a really creative divine principle, whereas Spinoza's postulation is only that of unmoving being or all-inclusive substance. Besides, causality has become perfectly intellectualised in Spinoza, and the causal relation transformed into a mathematical one. Unsatisfactory it can only be, to leave the absolute Substance as sole real Ground of all being, and, at the same time, of all effect or working, for one cannot say that the causality of things finite is, in any wise, properly related, or accounted for, by Spinoza. He has not escaped confounding logical

ground with real Cause, so that logical cogency does duty for dynamic efficiency. An immanent causality is taken by Spinoza to bring about manifold effects or consequences. But he has done nothing adequate to give us transeunt causality, as a real principle of the causality of the finite, although he recognises such transeunt form as existing.

Pass we now from the rarefied atmosphere of Spinoza's Monism to the Pluralistic Metaphysic of Leibniz. Both set out from the same fundamental concept of substance. Leibniz, by his dynamic conception of matter, improves upon Cartesian conception. Force was to him the great reality, and cause and effect were equivalent. His monads receive without interruption the efficient force which flows unto them from God. No ultimate ground of things can be found within the world itself. Each event or thing has its cause in another, and, follow the series of conditions as far as we may, we never come to an ultimate and unconditioned Cause. But the laws of Nature must have a universal sufficient reason, which latter determines itself as God, the universal Cause. "The sufficient or final reason must be outside the sequence or series of particular contingent things," according to Leibniz, no matter how infinite such series may be. The final reason must be in a necessary substance called God. Hence his principle of sufficient reason leads Leibniz to find ground or reason for the series in the infinitely wise and good God, Who, for him, relates and connects all, and binds them into the unity of a world-whole. One with Himself, the Monad of monads,

God is thus the Absolute Monad. Of course, it may be said God is thus the Infinite First Cause conditioning all the changeful terms of the series. But we do not, for our part, regard the objective grounds as, in Leibniz, necessarily identical with First Cause in the strict sense. The principle of the ground certainly does not seem to be identical with that of causality. The central monad—which is God, as the supreme, creative, and cosmic force—is something for which Leibniz would claim all that belonged to the *αἰτία* of Plato.

Wolff gave more systematised expression to the metaphysical idealism of Leibniz. Wolff made meritorious use of the distinction between ground (*Grund*) and cause (*Ursache*). The relation of real dependence he discriminated from conceptual connexion further than had before been done. It was much to have advanced on Leibniz by his mode of distinguishing the real ground from the ideal one. But there is, for Wolff, no criterion for cause save its logical character. The world-system, whose final ground is God, he sets on a purely logical basis. To Wolff the world must be grounded in that which has its ground in itself. From the fact of our existence, which must have a sufficient Cause, Wolff argues in *à posteriori* fashion to a First Cause—a necessary Being with the sufficient Cause of its existence in itself (*ens a se*). But Wolff is far from self-consistent in working out his scheme. His logical schematism Wolff confirms by appeal to the facts of experience. He introduced a view of Reality somewhat confused and accidental, and we are not shewn

how the facts of experience come to harmonise so completely with the pronouncements of reason.

Crusius was critical of the Wolffian reliance on logical forms, and distinguished the real relation of cause and effect from the merely logical relation of ground and consequent. He had the merit to make the real ground co-ordinate with the ideal ground in a way that not only weakened the rationalism of Leibniz, but registered an advance on Wolff. Of Lessing, Jacobi, Newton, Hobbes, Locke, Samuel Clarke, we do not allow ourselves to speak. But as to Berkeley. Setting out from results reached by Locke, Berkeley makes God "the Cause of our Sensations." Our sensations Berkeley took to be supported by some substratum or thinking substance—for the whole world of appearance is made by him dependent on a metaphysical principle—and produced by some active cause. Since such cause could be neither corporeal substance—which for him was non-existent—nor ourselves—since the ideas perceived by sense depend not on ourselves—it must be God. 'Tis from the principle of causation that the existence of God is inferred by Berkeley. The Will of God is for him the real, transcendent Ground, conditioning the reality and connexion of appearances. We have here no call to go into the suggestive parallel and contrast presented by Berkeley and Malebranche—who most nearly approximated to his position—in their treatment of our ideas in relation to God. We are only concerned to note how Berkeley attached himself to the principle of causality, in seeking to reach external existence and God; how he perceived not that principle to be a mere principle of reason, incapable, as

such, of yielding objective fact or existence. Berkeley strangely failed to see that God and other selves—implicitly assumed by him—are no more immediately experienced by us than is the world of matter.

Next, as to Hume. Hume carried the conceptions of cause, and First Cause, to most conspicuous and distinctive issues. In the seventeenth century, the causal problem had been the cardinal problem of philosophy, and none dreamed, in the days of Occasionalism and Pre-established Harmony, of raising the question of the validity of the presupposition that the causal connexion is analytic and rational. But now, in midst of the eighteenth century, Hume and Kant came, each in his own way, to regard the causal connexion as no rational-analytic one, but empirical-synthetic. With Hume, it was the empirical result of association; with Kant, it was, as we shall see, a means of connecting our ideas, and, as such, independent of experience, being based upon an inborn uniformity of thought. A *cause* is to Hume an object—unfortunately, not an event—"precedent and contiguous" to another, and so united to it that the idea of the one "determines the mind" to form the idea of the other. To Hume, there is within the causal connexion no pure inner relation, causal connexion and causal knowledge being for him grounded in the subject, not in the things. The axiom that, for every effect there must be a cause, is to Hume a groundless assumption, and he will only admit that one thing follows another—that change follows change. That there is anything in one change to produce another change, or that there is anything outside of the series of

changes to produce them, is to Hume a position unproven and lacking the support of reason. The axiom just referred to was, to Hume, not merely something beyond knowledge, but contrary to fact. For he robs the notion of cause of all dynamic quality from the outset, and reduces it to the idea of an invariable time-sequence, so that it belongs not to a category of energy. Causal connexion means to him merely the feeling of necessitated transition, existent only in the mind. The concept of force as an immaterial power passing from cause to effect was, on the Humian view, regarded as unthinkable, and Hume thought the supposed necessary connexion could be explained by appeal to the pure, unadorned facts of experience. But we thus become shut up within a narrow circle of sensational experience, which becomes for us the sum of the universe. A few sensations are quite unable to prove a base and ground of existence, or to eject the principle of causation. Hume took the principle of causality to be, strictly, neither empirical nor analytic; to him it was due to a confusion of the reason, which raised a subjective necessity to an objective one. This belief in causal connexion was taken to be instinctive, and unlimited in its range of demand for a sufficient cause. But such demands can never be satisfied. The truth really was, Hume smuggled in perception of an object behind all the feelings of sensation on which he built. Hume had the insight to perceive the significance of the doctrine of efficient cause as involving that of First Cause, and so for him the door of escape lay in denying



efficient causes, or causation itself. He actually pushes the thought that we have no intuition of efficient causation to an extreme, wherein we are left to believe that things may come into being uncaused. Hume does not see that he is not disproving real causality, but only perpetrating the vulgar error of confounding the knowledge of activity or causal power with the knowledge of its inner character; and, because we cannot have the latter—the *how*—he denies the former—the *that*. He does not see that he is missing the mark in setting down the law, or, more correctly, principle of causation as no *à priori* law of thought, but only a habit of mind—the habit that leads us to assume that every change must have a cause. For it is something deeper than our habit of expecting like result or effect under like circumstances or conditions that is to be explained: it is the mental necessity that leads to the formation of this habit of mind that calls for explanation. Such is the necessity of mind involved that it affirms the habit to be really a law of mind—the necessary and universal law that every change must have a cause. Cause, as a real power, we have known, before it has become generalised into such a law, and such a law or principle of causation within us corresponds to the law of causation without us, which connects existing event with its own cause. But Hume's position just is, that the transition from cause to effect is due to no objective nature of cause and effect, but solely to the mental connexion acquired—to the mere association of ideas. To him reason, as distinguished

from experience, cannot conclude to cause as necessary to every beginning of existence.

Hume's criticism of the causal relation was valid enough against the basal assumption of the Cartesian rationalism, which identified causation with explanation—had continual reference to God for explanation of finite phenomena. It was a merit, on Hume's part, to have replaced occult causes by a sequence of phenomena. In his stress on the diversity of objects and events, Hume clearly fails to do justice to the ever-increasing unity of the material world disclosed by modern science, and to our growing insight into the connexion of causes and effects. Belief, based on instinct or custom, Hume does leave us, but that as a mere makeshift, whose real implications he did not see. Hume overpassed the Lockian position, when he saw no need to look on mind as the substance in which ideas must subsist. He also went beyond the Berkeleyan position when, in his rejection of efficiency, he felt under no constraint to refer our ideas to Deity as Cause. Though Hume's psychological idealism rejects efficient causation, yet he metaphysically feels the need of a non-sensuous cause of our sensations. Such a First or Intelligent Cause he takes to be uncertain and unknown, as lying "entirely beyond the reach of human experience," which alone teaches us "the nature and bounds of cause and effect." Thus the last speculative word of Hume is one of doubt or uncertainty, his only certainty being the commonplace positivist one, that what transcends experience cannot be proved, but only believed in. Experience does not, in Hume's

speculations, get beyond the thin film of external sense experience—an unworthy and inadequate conception of experience. His theoretic scepticism is indeed complete, but his theory of belief is mistaken, and, as applied to the First Cause, devoid of depth or rational insight. Reid, Brown, Stewart, Robinet, Hamilton, Mansel, we pass over, that we may turn to the thought of Kant. The non-sensuous cause of our sensations is found by Kant in assuming a *transcendental object*, even though this object is to him a mere *nescio quid*. Such a non-empirical causality he deems necessary. The whole connexion and extent of our possible perceptions are by Kant referred to this object. Let the action of this *transcendental cause* be phenomenised, and the results will be found in perfect accord with the laws of empirical causation—a position which finds precise parallel in Hume. Kant denies significance to the principle of efficient causation in the sensuous world. But, with its subjective origin, he, unlike Hume, claims for it an objective value as related to objects of sensible experience. He thinks no mode exists of effecting transition from things existent to something quite different called a cause. He thinks the underlying Cause of Nature cannot be merely causal. Thus, no doubt, Kant admits the need of something which is Cause of the phenomenal world, but the strange thing is that this same Kant, who recognised the principle of efficient causation in assuming the *transcendental object*, declines to find this primal and self-subsistent Cause in God. Kant has been far enough from using with sufficient care the two theories or types of causality which

mark his thought. Besides the phenomenal cause or empirical causality of the understanding, Kant recognises that other form which may be designated the metempirical or intelligible causal principle of reason. Clearly, to this latter, with its *Ding-an-sich*, Kant's disallowance of transcendent application of the causal category should make causal appeal impossible. The "First Cause," as it had been customarily presented in cosmological form, was, in Kant's view, lost through begging of the question, for that form of proof had been seeking for a First Cause of all that is "contingent" in an "absolutely necessary" Being. Kant could not agree to this overstepping the limits of the sense-world in making such inference to a Cause for the "contingent." No more could he accept the conclusion to a First Cause from the impossibility of an infinite series of causes or conditions, since, of course, we cannot make such an objective transfer of subjective principle. Kant has the merit to have brought philosophy really to see that the First Cause can by no possibility be the mere end-link of a series conditioned in space and time, for henceforth the First Cause—a Divine Mind or Will—was seen to belong to the sphere of noumena, and to be not co-ordinate with phenomena in a causal series. While Kant thinks we do not theoretically know whether there is a Supreme Cause of the universe behind the ends of Nature, he yet thinks—such is the judgment of the practical reason—we are rationally compelled to regard such a Supreme Being as conditioning the ends of nature. This rational First Cause he thinks we cannot further know, and we are driven, in

his view, from causality to teleology for any further light or guidance. Our knowledge of the First Cause is further secured, he thinks, by consideration of man's moral nature, whereby the moral and natural worlds become united and harmonised. Such inferential knowledge of the First Cause, arrived at in finely inductive manner, is reached in no purely causal mode, as must be carefully remembered, Kant having seen that by the method of purely speculative reason, such an issue was causally impossible. But Kant was without real warrant, when dealing with purely causal aspects or proofs, in assuming that causality cannot carry us beyond the impressions of sensuous experience. Where, on such a view, would be his warrant for taking causality as even subjectively necessary? Kant's stress on the endless series of causes, too, is really irrelevant, the question being strictly one of the warrant for a First Cause, as determined by the lack of self-existent and necessary being on the part of the universe. Besides, Kant did not make the best of the argument as to the endless series of causes and effects, or he would have shown how, from his standpoint, the law of causality, standing by itself, never does or can, in the infinite regress, reach a true cause—a mind or will. Kant's objection to transfer of thought necessity, in the cosmological form of proof, to a necessity of existence, lacks in daring, consistency, and insight, for what thought or reason must *of necessity* think is to be taken as true—has elsewhere in the teaching of Kant been so taken as true. What does really remain is the question whether the world can be an effect of anything out-

side itself. It boots nothing that Kant, with his restriction of causality to sensible phenomena, would have deemed an intra-mundane Cause illusory: modern thought and science have taught us to pass from phenomena to their supersensuous Ground.

Herder—to whom the thought of a World-Creator was the most fruitful of all ideas in human life—Schleiermacher, and Schelling, all dealt with our theme. Schelling does not relate the world of sense, in its origin, in any satisfactory manner, causally, to its World-Ground. Krause, his disciple, wrote suggestively of the causation of God, Who is to him First-Being and Cause of the world. Maine de Biran opposed Hume on causality, holding that we know the concept of cause within the inner sphere of our immediate self-consciousness. He finds his origin of the universal notion of causality in the necessary connection of all phenomena with an Efficient Cause. In some recently edited papers, we find Biran saying that the relation of cause to effect is principle and base of all metaphysics. Biran does not lack in depth, and yet his metaphysical treatment of cause is, in some respects, not strong. His psychological theory failed to bring us transeunt causality, gave us only the concept of causality as immanent. Schopenhauer repeated his error. The First Cause conception was specifically and suggestively dealt with by the Spanish philosopher, Balmez, agreement of the effect with the cause being to him no mere logical or successional affair, but something that implied the idea of a producing force or activity. Anton Günther's

dualistic theism reached a relation of entire opposition between God and the created world, which latter is to him a contraposition of Deity. An unfeeling Deism is, however, avoided by Günther, because God and the world are not really without an inner connection to his thought. At the same time, Günther's working out of their relations leaves much to be desired on grounds of clearness and consistency. Günther deduces from the dependence of created things the relative character of dependent being, that he may conclude to the knowledge of absolute and necessarily independent Being. The First Cause takes in him the form of independent Creative Will. Adolf Trendelenburg—like Biran and Schopenhauer—finds the foundation of the causal concept, and the pattern of causal connection, in the relation of consciousness to the products of its activity. But the same concept is also, with Trendelenburg, somewhat ambiguously derived from the relation in which the products of the activity of consciousness stand, one to another, in virtue of their origin in one and the same continuous flow of activity. To Trendelenburg the inner movement of thought exactly corresponds with real movement or external motion, all being consisting to him, in Aristotelic fashion, of motion. Of all the categories deduced from motion, Trendelenburg puts the *causa efficiens* first. But he holds that when, as First Cause (*Ursache*), God is taken to be *causa sui*, causality is no more marked by that which distinguished it in the case of things finite. He opines that an endless regress of causes

and effects does not suffice to give us an Unconditioned beyond the world. He thinks the series of causes and effects is made to run away into Being. Herbart left change metaphysically ungrounded, his theory of essence yielding but a shimmering and uncertain light. If, from the world of appearances, we set out to seek a First Cause or Principle of their regularity and order, we find, in the Herbartian conceptions, nothing which can, metaphysically, explain those appearances out of that which is taken by him to be true being.

In marked contrast to Herbartian rejection of self-determination in Deity—to His being *causa sui*—stands Richard Rothe, who makes this very conception of the Absolute his starting-point. Rothe's affinities with Schelling and Weisse tend to make him regard this Primal Ground, however, as still too indeterminate; it yet becomes the Creative Ground or causal principle of the whole process of world-development.

Lotze took up the Herbartian problem of the existent, and dealt with the relations of the real in a metaphysical treatment, which contains much of interest for our subject. He brings the phenomenon into causal connection with the noumenon, whose mere form of appearance it is. The explanation of any effect, Lotze thinks, requires us not only to assign the causes (*Ursachen*), but also to show the reason (*Grund*), which entitles the causes to be causes of this particular effect and no other. Lotze takes inquiry into the "bringing-to-pass" of efficient causation to be meaningless and



fruitless. An absolute beginning in the reciprocal causation of things Lotze rejects, for to him only the form of individual effects varies within the sphere of ceaseless efficient causation. That is to say, there is no question of causal action alternating with non-action. Lotze thinks we no more know how "causal action" is produced, than we know how "Being" is made. The cosmological reasoning to a First Cause is, to Lotze, no sort of demonstration, but an attempt to justify an instinctive intuition, which, in his view, has its origin in the very nature of our being. Lotze is manifestly impressed with the way in which, "all along, through all shiftings of view, one simple faith has yet preserved itself unshaken, the faith in an eternal First Cause, who bestowed on the world of spirits living freedom for the combat on behalf of a sacred aim, and denied it to the world of things, that under a blind necessity was to be a stage and a weapon for the efforts of the combatants" (*Microcosmus*, Eng. ed., vol. i. p. 25). Elsewhere Lotze says—and it seems well to give his own words—"Every effect produced by one element on another, even the most insignificant, is due to the indwelling vitality of this One Being, and equally requires its constant co-operation. If there is a class of processes in Nature, which, under the name of mechanical, we contrast, as blind and purposeless, with others in which the formative activity of the One Being seems to stand out clearly, the contrast is certainly not based on the fact that effects of the former kind are left to be

governed by a peculiar principle of their own, whilst only in the latter does the One Universal Cause attempt, after some incomprehensible fashion, to subdue the alien force. In both cases alike, the effects proceed solely from the eternal One itself; and the difference lies in *what* it enjoined in each case" (*Metaphysics*, Eng. ed., vol. ii. p. 145). In another connection Lotze guards against too much being inferred from this fact of a First Cause,—“The path by which we reached the notion of this Supreme Cause taught us nothing about it, save that it is actual, and one and the same in all things; it disclosed to us nothing of the content of its being, and of the inherent nature with which it fills this mould of unity and infinity” (*Microcosmus*, Eng. ed., vol. i. p. 445). 'Tis right to seek an Unconditioned, but Lotze thinks we get no insight as to how this sole Unconditioned conditions anything else, and serves as the initial term—or First Cause—in the conditioned series of the world's events. Now, it may very well be that Lotze is right as to our knowledge of *how* the conditioning takes place; in dependent being, as perceived fact, we are led to the conclusion *that* Independent Being exists; but, are we really to say, like Lotze, that such dependent being does not, also, disclose, to some extent, the *what* of the Primal Cause or Being—as revealed, ontologically, in what reason perceives of His nature, and, cosmologically, of His world-activities? Causal law is for Lotze a necessary postulate of thought; and it is interesting to note that Benno Erdmann—most recent of notable writers

on the subject—agrees with Lotze in this; but Erdmann does not make it a law of pure thought, for experience supplies the occasion of forming the law, and gives it its determinate forms. The weakness of Lotze's thought in this connection appears to be, a lack of what is thoroughgoing, or a tendency to veer round from a conceptual and rationalistic position to a perceptual and positivistic one.

Comte thought positive science unable to show us the absolute causes of things, and First Causes were to him irrational conceptions. Nothing is to him absolute, all is relative. Mill finds fault with Comte for objecting to the word *cause*, and yet it is very questionable whether Comte was not the more consistent, from the empiricist standpoint. For the word *cause* clearly carries in use a stronger sense of real dynamic dependence than the mere hypothetical uniformity of experience would wish it to signify. To investigate the causes of phenomena is to Comte a vain pretension, and the word force he would avoid because of its dynamic significance. Everything must be reduced to simple statement of fact, and forces are only movements produced, or tending to be produced. The Positivist doctrine that Efficient Cause is unknown and inscrutable to us is indefensible, since it implies we know only that which physical science reveals. Efficient Cause lies hid from sense, which never can perceive the *nexus* between cause and effect. But their inseparable concomitance is a primitive conviction, antedating experience though arising only in and through expe-

rience, so that it is not merely empirical. It was this presence of the causal idea in our primitive self-consciousness that led Cousin to call it "the primary idea."

Of the Italian thinkers, Rosmini, Gioberti, and Bonatelli, I forbear to say anything, having spoken of them in other works. Mill dealt with causation only within the phenomenal sphere, never in such wise as to bring causality into relation to the real essence of the world. But no more carefully formulated attack against the First Cause argument has ever been made than that by Mill. It abounds, for all that, in inaccuracies, illogicalities, and inconsistencies. He cannot even state the causation issue correctly. It is not true, as Mill alleges, that everything, of which we know, is argued to have had a cause; 'tis so argued only of everything which had a beginning. We know there must be Being which had no cause, in the ordinary sense of cause. In the same breath Mill also inaccurately calls the world "a name for the aggregate of all that we know," when we know this, *other* and *also*, that said world has a cause, distinct from it, without which it would not have existed. Mill reverts to the problem of Hume and Kant, relative to the causal axiom, throwing his weight upon the logical side of the problem, as Hume had done upon the psychological aspect. He would ground the causal axiom in experience, prove it by induction, and limit its validity to the universe as we know it. Mill saw the untenableness of Hume's definition of cause as invariable time-sequence, and, as Mill rejected the volitional theory,

he conceived a cause to be an unconditional time-antecedent of some event or change. This gives us a relation of necessity, and the necessity has been shewn by Kant to be, in the case of cause, no mathematical one. Mill admits that our idea of causation is derived from our own constitution, but thinks the tendency to regard "all phenomena" as produced "by the will of some sentient being" is due to mere "original Fetichism." Mill betrays a curious illogicality, or inconsistency with his own empiricist pre-suppositions, when he insists on the unchanging sequence as an "invariable" and "unconditional" one, for experience knows nothing of any right to carry assertions forward in this anticipative fashion to events that have not yet been observed. Even if Mill's insistence on the unconditionality of causation had been so meritorious as it has often been taken to be, it would still be clearly impracticable in any given case.

It is, again, no deep view Mill takes, when he thinks it is not necessary to seek a cause for every fact, but only for every change. The permanent elements of the world—the primary qualities of matter, for example—are uncaused, and in no such need of explanation. But, even so, a reason must be necessary for those elements or aspects of the world that do not change. Reason or cause there must be for the permanence of the primary qualities of matter or anything else. So far is it from being the case, as Mill expressly asserts, that the "essence of causation" is "incompatible" with "a First Cause," that it is precisely the essence of causation

which makes the First Cause an absolute necessity. For, as no series can be without cause or beginning, there must be prime or originating cause behind the series. Mill, in a strangely inconsistent way, goes on, after saying it is of the "essence of causation" that there should be no First Cause, actually to admit a first cause in the shape of force as the primal source of change. Strange also, that, in doing so, Mill does not see that, as force produces change, and all change is in time, there must have been beginning to the action of force, and true first cause behind it. Mill, perceiving something of the awkwardness of his position, declares for mind as the first mover, but, in a very unsatisfactory way, dismisses the argument for mind, as the only possible cause of force, as a very old one. He tries to shew that volition is itself caused, so that will cannot be primal cause. He makes strange use of the doctrine of the conservation of force in his argument, which has the freedom of the will as really the thing involved. To Mill matter and force have had no beginning—which, he thinks, cannot be said of mind—and for them, therefore, no cause is required. But, one cannot help asking, What can modern metaphysics do with such crude conceptions of the relations of mind and matter? His experiential demand Mill carries into the religious sphere, so that belief in God, if ours, must be based on observation of Nature, in all its "invariableness." But Mill evinces a strange blindness to the part played in cognition by inner evidence, or the inward creative power of the mind itself, which is no less necessary to the

synthesis than is the outward element. His phenomenalism comes into bold relief in his whole treatment of the First Cause argument, in which he is quite unable to find need or right to postulate mind or intelligent will as the Primal Cause of all things. He recognises "physical" and "efficient" causes, but of the latter professes to know nothing—not even whether they "exist at all." 'Twas his mistake to suppose that the question of the cause being itself caused has to do with the "essence of causation," when what is of its essence is, that one entity or being is a cause to some other entity or being. Mill's positivist modes of thinking leave him quite incapable of appreciating the idea of force involved in mind or conscious will, as something not to be confounded with categories of matter or material force. Mill's thought clearly lacks in metaphysical depth and grounding, else its phenomenal basis would not have been left without support in Will behind nature or experience. It should, however, be noticed that Mill's theory positively affirms something original and indestructible behind the finite and conditioned, and that something is certainly as metaphysical in character as is the idea of a First Cause. Of course, in this way we get only to a necessity of thought—a colourless beginning—which does not advance us in the way of real knowledge. But still, it gives us a definite start and result in the purely metaphysical sphere, and that is surely much, although the conception waits to be clothed upon with religious significance.

Passing over the German positivist, E. Laas, who

is near of philosophical kin to Mill, we proceed to speak of Spencer. The First Cause conception presents an insuperable difficulty to one who, like Spencer, takes self-existence to be inconceivable. Such self-existence Spencer takes to be an indirect denial of Creation. Again, he admits we cannot inquire into the causal impressions of the world upon us without committing ourselves, inevitably, to the hypothesis of a First Cause. But if our minds inexorably demand such a First Cause, it is then hard to acquiesce in his other position as to self-existence being inconceivable. A mode of existence may be quite conceivable, though it lies beyond our full comprehension. Spencer follows Mansel, who thinks that a cause cannot be absolute, and that the absolute cannot be cause, the conception of the absolute being taken to imply a "possible" existence out of all relation. Neither of them seems to have seen that, if the existence is a "possible"—not a necessary—one, the true absoluteness, or independence of the absolute, need not be in the least impaired, should the Absolute become a Cause. It is the idea of a First Cause that is to Spencer so inimical to our knowing the Absolute, that the Absolute cannot, in fact, be known. But this conclusion is based upon the absurd conception of the Absolute as the sole existent. For Spencer, while recognising the Absolute to be—not out of all relation, but—only out of necessary or dependent relation, illogically wanders from this position in working out his argument. But this, the only rational Absolute, is known in causal relation to the universe—is known as the



support or ground of all being that is contingent. Thus, really the only Absolute we know is known as First Cause, in this sense and relation. For the true Absolute is all-comprehending rather than all-exclusive, as Spencer supposes. The Absolute of Hamilton, Mansel, and Spencer, disowning all knowledge of causes, is, in truth, a perfectly vain and imaginary abstraction—a purely negative and non-existent Absolute. Mansel had denied that the Absolute could be First Cause, because a cause is at once put into relation and limitation by an effect. But his conception of the Absolute was metaphysically absurd and untenable: God cannot be set out of relation in this way, for He is the Absolute precisely in relation to the relative: His absoluteness is seen in that His activity determines its own conditions and limits. Spencer, however, has the merit not to rest in the merely negative conception of the Absolute, with which Hamilton and Mansel were content. But Spencer's realism is an arbitrary hypothesis, leaving us no satisfactory account of the grounding of the world of appearances in the Absolute. His spatial realism would like to land us in the absurd position of making space a Primal Being, infinite space having, in his view, existed for ever, without origin and cause. Such an "overcome" standpoint is one on which modern metaphysical thought need waste no words.

Near to Spencer in many respects is the German thinker, Aloys Riehl, but Riehl has affinities with the intellectualistic basis of the Kantian theory of knowledge, so that he oscillates between these two. As a

critical realist, he holds the objects of experience to be appearances, with a transcendent, absolute Real for their Ground; he also, with Kant, takes objectivity to be grounded in the synthetic unity of apperception. The causal principle is to him only a subjective one, necessary for experience to do its work, but not yet having objective validity. He distinguishes the *law* of causality from the *concept* of causality, the former being to him valid only for appearances, the latter not limited to experiences. With Spencer, he subsumes the causal axiom under that of the conservation of energy. A First Cause, which should creatively begin the series of changes, would be an uncaused change, and, as such, is to Riehl "absolutely unthinkable." This impossibility of assuming such a First Cause is, on the part of Riehl, nothing but a succumbing to the positivistic spirit.

That finely independent German thinker, Eduard Zeller, held that we ourselves are the one sole cause, of whose mode of action we have, through inner intuition, immediate knowledge. To him man at the outset is dependent, for his notion of causality, on what the analogy of his own doing and willing teaches him. This position of Zeller is significant, for it is this immediate intuition of cause which raises in us the demand for more than a phenomenal cause. Zeller shows that the successional idea of causation does not satisfy thought's demands, and he explicates the relation of *à priori* thought and experience to each other in our concept of causality. Zeller concludes, but in a teleologico-causal manner, to a sole First Cause, from which in the last result or

relation all effects spring, all nature laws being to him but declarations of the different ways and manners in which this First Cause works out its whole essentially purposeful activity.

Those transcendental realists, von Hartmann and Volkelt, take merely immanent causality as untenable, and presuppose a transcendent causality among things in themselves, and in relation to the subject. Transcendental idealism is to Hartmann absolute illusionism, while to Volkelt causality is the demand of consciousness, such causality being concerned, not with what appearances are in our consciousness, but with what they trans-subjectively are. Hartmann, starting from the world as both rational and irrational, goes back to a principle at once rational and irrational in the Absolute, thus failing to reach the real Monism he essayed. Hence the only form of first cause exhibited by him is that of the Absolute Substance, pre-existent to the world. This Absolute Spirit, the Unconscious, with its twofold attributes of blind will and strengthless idea, he represents, in its outworking relations to the world, in no satisfactory way. The significant thing in Hartmann's conception of the Unconscious is, for our present purpose, its going so far on the way of theism in its postulation of transcendent Being—Being-in-itself above the World—for that Unconscious, which is the union of infinite will and intelligence. Or, in Hartmann's own style of speaking, which is the eternal, self-existent, immaterial Subject of the universe in its actually realised totality.

E. König, a strong adherent of the experiential

side of Kant, made extremely valuable inquiries into the problems of causation. He rejects the positions of philosophic rationalism in respect of the conception of cause. The Kantian "apriorism" does not, in his view, profess to give even the *form* of the causal connection without an appeal to experience. König's discussions, however, move within the relations of the causal problem to modern natural science and psychology, and do not run up into those theological aspects of First Cause, with which we are here specially concerned.

Wundt, like Riehl, endeavours, in his critical realism, to introduce surer harmony between the standpoint of empiricism and that of *apriorism*. He is at pains to show the causal law to be grounded in an universal law of thought, which, however, first shows through experience its applicability to outer appearances. Wundt takes the empirical apprehension of causal relation to correspond uniformly with the demand of a logical relation, the whole causal connection of nature being for him a unitary, logical system of grounds and consequences. Cause and substance cannot, in his view, be isolated. The substantialising of the causal concept is rooted, psychologically, according to Wundt, in our active personality, and, initially, force is, he thinks, such substantial causality. The metaphysical thought element in this conception must, he admits, make it a "dark" one. Wundt leads to no satisfactory result for our First Cause conception, for, though he makes much of the collective spirit (*Gesammtgeist*), his position appears to be a really somewhat self-

contradictory one, the idea of a World-Will at one time being replaced at another by emphatic declaration of the non-existence of any absolutely transcendent World-Ground.

G. Thiele, another German philosopher of to-day, may be touched on here. Thiele deals with causality in its relation to substance—the concept of the Absolute Substance receiving particular attention at his hands. He maintains the worth of the law of causality for experience, *à priori* as it may be. Thiele vindicates for cosmological ways of reaching a First Cause greater worth and validity than Kant allowed, proceeding, in his defence of a self-subsisting Ground (*causa sui*), from the empirically given. This One Unconditioned Being, or Absolute Substance, is, for Thiele, the First Cause (*Urgrund*) of all reality: it is so as *causa sui*, he expressly maintains.

That severe critic of French eclectic spiritualism, C. Renouvier, may be allowed to have postulated a beginning for the world, and to have held the ascending series or infinite regress of causes to have a first term or Cause. His idealistic phenomenalism adapts cosmological forms of thought to meet his own type of phenomenism, which finds in conscience—as if in a conscience unique and universal—the revelation of the absolute. Our own conscience is, for Renouvier, the type of God; his God is not that of the theologians, but one limited and personal. But Renouvier's relativist position keeps him too well content with relations for him to be eager to penetrate to origins; consequently, he shirks the creative causality of Deity, because it lies, for him, outside both logic and ex-

perience. The causal theory develops, in Renouvier's hands, into a philosophy of nature or a dynamic theory of being; for he denies transitive causality outright, and holds apparent causal transition to be no more than the harmony which marks the production of a consequent. The thought of one who sacrifices the principle of causality in Renouvier's fashion cannot prove very fruitful in the present connection.

Another French thinker, E. Caro, preferred the term First Cause, to such terms as the Absolute and the Infinite. Mozley laid his chief stress on causality, believing that the causal principle, applied to the world, would issue in mind passing, as if demonstratively, from contingent reality to God as Cause. He protests against the "First Great Cause" being resolved "into a mere physical force"; "the Universal Cause" has "will," no less than "power commensurate with Himself." The argument is buttressed with an assumption of Infinity, the idea of which, arising out of our own minds, is taken to be correspondent with reality.

R. Flint, in his theistic treatment, maintains the need to demonstrate that the world is an event, an effect; from an examination of the universe he concludes that it is an event or effect, for which "an uncaused cause" must be postulated. He makes the argument sustain a Spirit or Person as the First Cause so gained. Flint does not wish to ignore elements or aspects of an immanent character, but Nature is left an effect, whose Cause is God, in practically the same manner as natural effects flow

from natural causes. The difficulties in adopting what, by its stress on an extra-mundane Cause, is really a Deistic mode of conception, are not felt and faced. For, at the end of the series of effects, is a wholly new Power to which appeal is made—one, too, which cannot be set down in scientific terms. For a valid and satisfactory argument, the natural world must be used in another fashion, namely, as evidence of the spiritual—of the need of a Ground of phenomena and their laws.

W. G. Ward, unlike Martineau, held strongly to the theory of second causes, and directed his trenchant critical warfare on causation chiefly against Mill's "phenomenist" views. Martineau gave careful study to the First Cause problem, accepting the metaphysical conception of causation, and rejecting all views that assumed the causal relation to be subjective only. He thought God is to be known first as Cause. Will is to him the only cause of which we have immediate knowledge, and the origin of the idea of cause he finds in man's experience of resistance to his volitional effort. He sets aside the notion that a thing is cause because it is an object in which reside attributes. The Spinozan view of substance as cause of all things he rejects, for, "except as the seat of change, or partner in a change, no 'thing' can ever play the part of cause." Martineau, in adhering to the volitional theory of causation, which had been favoured by Berkeley, Hamilton, and Mansel, makes a scarcely commendable change in the use of the term cause, when he uses it for choice. "By a cause," he says, "I under-

stand that which determines an alternative; that is, with which it rests to produce either of two phenomena; so that, far from admitting that different effects cannot come from one cause, I even venture on the paradox that nothing is a proper cause which is limited to one effect" (*A Study of Religion*, vol. ii. pp. 227, 228). But this still leaves the general question of causation, as given energy involving given result, something not disposed of. For, even if we take the volitional to be but the highest known type of force, we must still refrain from limiting metaphysical causality to self-conscious minds, so as to be able to explain in terms whereby types in general shall be included and accounted for.

The invariable antecedence, so often taken to be an essential mark of cause, is to Martineau a disqualification, more than anything else, for such a name. Force is to him involved in cause, for he takes causation to be production, and not mere prophecy. But force or power is not identical with cause: there is the agency in which the power resides. In perception the self apprehends the outer world as resisting force, and comes to know causal force "through inner intuition." In the sphere of nature, God is, to Martineau, dynamically, Sole Cause—the One Supreme Will—and the only second causes are created wills. He thus concludes to God as not simply "First Cause," but "Sole Cause," since of all forces in the vast cosmos, there is no force other than God's. It is certainly questionable whether Martineau is philosophically justified in so speaking, seeing he has elsewhere said that God cannot be



regarded as "the sole and exhaustive term" in the realm of uncreated being, but must always have had some "objective" on which to operate. Besides, it does not appear to be necessary or desirable, so to refer the whole phenomena of the cosmos directly to God's causality, with so endless an array of finite and dependent causes left to explain nothing. Martineau's general position on our problem is most explicit and clear, God being to him the One Universal Cause, infinite, and seat of all power, the "universe of originated things" being the "product" of that "Supreme Mind." The infinity of this Primal Cause was, however, set forth in not the most fortunate form by reason of the part played in it by spatial conceptions. J. H. Stirling forcefully represented the need for a First Cause — "a pre-existent First" — as "the all necessary Being" of all the "contingency" of the world, which "contingency" he takes to be "actual, particular, empirical fact." He says the contingent, as an *ab alio esse*, leads of necessity to an *esse* that is *a se*. In the work of C. B. Upton are advanced reasons for rejecting, with Kant and others, the old method of reasoning back, cosmologically, to a First Cause, the causes employed in this backward search for the "Cause of causes" being only of the kind made use of in science. But "the causes of which science treats are not the ultimate reality"; "not one of these causal agencies with which science deals bears the slightest mark of self-subsistence"; and so Upton postulates for them an absolute and self-existent Ground and Cause, following Lotze, and, to a large

extent, Martineau. What one mainly desiderates, in respect of Upton's discussion, is some fuller treatment of the necessity and validity of thought's transition from the contingent to the absolute—from the finite to the infinite. It may very well be that infinity is provided for in Upton's notion of the Absolute, but, though the provision for it may here be better than in Martineau's system of thought, it is present only in an implicit form.

W. Knight, in treating of the argument to a First Cause, whereby we escape from the contingent and reach the necessary, declares the argument to be "as illusory" as the old *à priori* arguments. This is to forget that these latter were reasonings from mere conceptions of the mind, while the First Cause argument proceeds from fact of external kind, whose reality is not questioned, and for whose existence explanation must be found. Knight also writes rather loosely of the ascent of the argument from the finite to the *infinite*; it must be kept in view that the argument logically leads—and only aims to lead—to a Cause indefinitely great, but not necessarily infinite—only greater than the universe.

A. C. Fraser lays great stress on causality, deeming the world to be marked by characters which show it, whether originated or not, to be dependent: he finds an "uncaused Cause," independent of change, to be necessary. He shews the inadequacy of natural causes, which, as the mere connections of phenomena, are only the symbols of causes; and from their unsatisfactoriness he rises, from needs of his "spiritual constitution," to the postulation of a "morally

trustworthy Evolver" as the "true and resting Cause." Finding God in his own moral experience, man, according to Fraser, passes on to regard "the whole natural succession" as "the manifestation of infinite spiritual or personal agency": to the whole problem Fraser finds his clue in the knowledge of our own minds as true cause—"insufficiently accounted for by physical causes." His argument receives a teleologico-causal turn when he thinks we can discern a mind, akin to our own, "expressed in the orderly sequences and adaptations of nature," and feel ourselves "in the presence of a Power that reveals itself in articulate language of law and purpose." Fraser concludes to a Final Power or Cause, which is Will or Spirit, as we are. On which presentation it must suffice now to remark that it would be a more logical and thoroughgoing procedure to pass from the world's dependence, from which he set out, to a proper World-Ground, thereby avoiding the confusions leading to, and involved in, such a "resting" First Cause.

G. T. Ladd has dealt with the Causal Argument in another than its regressive form. Says Ladd, "the relations of the Absolute to the world must be actualized in terms of force; the One Cause must interpenetrate and make real all so-named 'causal' relations." He resembles Samuel Clarke at times in his insistences, as when he says,—“Something is real; this is the implicate of all cognitive experience.” While the cognitive aspects of experience have sometimes been supposed to receive somewhat undue stress in Ladd's insistences, yet it should

not be overlooked how largely voluntaristic he is in psychology. He has, in any case, the merit, with the late S. Harris, and the late B. P. Bowne, among American thinkers, to have set the First Cause argument on its proper basis. The goal Ladd reaches in his thought is a "One and Ultimate Ground" of the world—the same which religion calls God—transcendent, under proper definition, as well as immanent.

James Ward takes causality to be a conception arising out of our own conscious "activity," and holds, as against Spencer, that if we attribute causality or power to the Unknowable, we so far assimilate it "to ourselves, as being causal agents." Further, "The First Cause of a cosmos, to be an adequate cause and deserve the name, must be a Supreme Intelligence." It is by the path of spiritualistic monism that Ward essays to reach this First Cause, but there is a lack of explication as to how the journey upward is to be made. H. Höffding, in his so-called Critical monism, has taken God to be First Cause—cause of everything—in the sense of being Ground of existence and principle of ultimate unity. But the ideal of science, in its search for a principle of unity, cannot, in his view, be a First Cause, since the principle of causation itself, on which it is grounded, would thereby be violated. Höffding's position is unsatisfactory, inasmuch as God, supposed principle of the unity of being, not only fails in His occasionalist office and is explanation of nothing, but is really beyond reach of the finite mind. The positions of Ernst Mach may now be

noticed. Mach's doubt of causal idea goes deep, and he would reduce causality to customary succession. He is led to give up the concept of cause, in view of the fact that "any given event is generally determined by a whole system of conditions." He prefers the concept of function. Mach has been of those whose scientific criticism of dynamical concept has tended to dissipate what efficient causality characterised Newtonian dynamics. Not even Helmholtz remained unmodified in his positions before a scientific criticism which was bold enough to suggest that force is no more than "mathematical fiction." Mach has not been able, in spite of himself, to avoid introducing a metaphysical conception into his view of causality—a transcendent Will like that of voluntaristic metaphysics. Mach has, unfortunately, done very little to bring this metaphysical position into harmony with other positions of an anti-metaphysical character assumed by him. What Mach has failed to furnish, A. Dorner with speculative skill has supplied. The Divine Causality of the world Dorner presents by means of the doctrine of potences, and Deity is, to him, not identified with the world-potences—is not wholly and only immanent in the world—but reaches beyond. The First Cause conception takes, in Dorner, the form of a maintenance that God knows and wills Himself to be the Ground of the possibility of all reality, and this in twofold sense—both real and ideal. The Absolute Essence, which so makes itself Ground of the possibility of all things, is at the same time ethically determined, and it is in virtue of the ethical moment that God makes



Himself the Source of all true reality that proceeds from Him. Dorner also favours a view of the First Cause as necessary to the grounding of the whole process of evolutionary development, which, without such unified Primal Cause, would appear a play of accidents. His presentation will not appear equally cogent to all minds, but has much in it that claims thoughtful consideration. It must be evident how far modern metaphysical thought has moved from being content with any First Cause conceptions that treated God as mere supernumerary Spectator of the world-machine's operations, instead of the present and ultimate Ground of all things. Nature has always more been taken to be in constant dependence upon an omnipresent Power—an all-embracing Power scarcely to be thought of as other than active, personal, intelligent. The unity of the Divine activity in the world-process has been maintained, and finite being and change have been taken to depend on the immanence of God in ways at times so excessive that all sight of a true transcendence has been lost. It only remains to consider a little more closely the modern bearings and significance of the First Cause conception. Beyond question the conception has suffered marked depreciation and borne a lessened sway in our time. Whether the reasons for this are altogether well-founded is another matter, which we shall presently examine, but such is the fact. The fact is due to influences both philosophical and scientific.

(1.) The *philosophical* may be taken first.

(a) The all-destroying Kant is chiefly responsible

for the depreciatory result and impression in this sphere. For he gave men to understand that the causal principle could not carry us beyond the sphere of sensuous experience, and that a First Cause was reached only by a final and unwarrantable leap from the last link in the infinite chain of intermediate causes. It ought to have grown always more evident how weak the Kantian procedure is, for the essential point in the argument to a First Cause is that the whole chain of causes, and every single link in the chain, are contingent, and depend on self-existent Being or Cause, without and beyond them. This, though the First Cause is immanent, while thus transcendent. The creative process is not only conditioned by God, but is in Him, yet He, as the Absolute, Unconditioned Reality and Ultimate Cause of all things, is more than the universe—for ever transcends it. For transcendence in Deity is just what the First Cause argument, in its true form, gives: it is a recognition that Deity, on Whom the world depends, is more and greater than the universe. Absolute as may be the Deity's knowledge of the world He has called into being, what good reason can be suggested why He should not yet distinguish Himself from the world He so perfectly knows? The transition from the world as, in whole, a known effect, to a World-Ground as its First Cause, is a rational and necessary one. This persistent demand of rational thought for an adequate Cause of the world's phenomena has not been at all invalidated by Kant's criticism, which was sharp, but not deep. The mind's quest for Primary and Ultimate Cause

is satisfied only by the postulation of God as First Cause, or present and perpetual Ground, of all things finite, in their dependence and contingency. Of course, the postulation of such a Ground or Cause depends on the compelling power or assent of Reason, but what we necessarily think we cannot choose but accept as true. 'Tis this necessitated thought, or inherent necessity of reason, that gives the argument its cogency, carrying actuality in its bosom, Kant notwithstanding. By such necessary truths—truths of reason—do we live: originating, as they do, in the subject and not the object of experience, the objects of experience must conform to them, or existence is no longer rational, and the universe no more determined by universal reason. Such truths of reason are part of our nature, axioms that cannot be resisted; they are such grounds and supports of our thought as make them the criterion of truth. Of course, a necessity of thought does not mean a necessity of existence, but the refusal of such a necessity of thought as we have here means absolute and irrational scepticism. Such a causal judgment carries for us, necessarily, objective validity because of the inconceivability of the opposite; wherefore, the judgment is affirmed because we can do no other in the interests of what we feel to be the truth. Even Kant himself does not pretend to find full explanation of phenomena in natural causality: he says "phenomena must have their grounds in that which is not a phenomenon." (*Kritik d. r. V.*, ed. Hartenstein, *Trans. Dial.*, p. 400). Precisely, but Kant falters and fails to take that further step to-



wards Reality or Ground beyond experience; the Reality is there, but he thinks it not theoretically knowable by us. "The causality of the necessary cause of the changes, and *therefore also the Cause itself* (italics ours), must belong to time, and to phenomena in time." (*Kritik d. r. V.*, ed. Hart., *Trans. Dial.*, p. 348). So says Kant, and beyond this craving for a positive explanation Kant does not rise. Such an application, however, of the idea of causality, in reference to the Supreme Cause or Primal Ground, as we have ourselves now made, may be taken as *à priori* inherent in mind, and the conviction arising from what is a necessity of our rational nature is one which, it may be remarked, becomes greatly heightened when the essential element of the ontological argument is allowed to mingle and fuse with the cosmological principle. In this way the stock objection—to which Goethe gave classic utterance—as to the First Cause acting upon the world as on a thing external, loses point and relevancy.

(b) More recently, the positions of Mansel and Hamilton, and, still more, the attitude of Spencer, as to the Unknowable, have tended to the same depreciatory result. The groundless character of the Spencerian attitude has been already exposed in our historical references. It is pertinent to observe, however, that Spencer's treatment of the Absolute Force, as the "Unknown Cause" of all phenomenal manifestations, has deepened the impression that a First Cause cannot be reached or known. But the First Cause is not a product yielded by those causal antecedents which are all the Spen-

cerian philosophy can give us; it is the deeper product arising from the intuition of cause in the mind. The concepts of cause and effect by no means arise, in Humian fashion, by way of mere empirical observation, even though it be in experience that, through the data of perception, we come to fashion the concept of cause: they much more rise, like other fundamental concepts, through abstraction of the understanding, which abstracts from the sensuous. The *à priori* character of the causal principle is not doubtful: if we compare the concepts, cause and effect, in our thought, we conclude that every effect presupposes a cause; and the very analysis of these concepts conducts us to the principle of causality. This, recognised as an *à priori*, analytic principle, is objectively real, like other *à priori* principles, and is fitly conditioned in its rise by experience, in connection with the abstracting power of thought. The inner *nexus* between cause and effect is not something which our subjectivity transfers to them, but is something objectively existent before our thought and independently of it. Hence the causal connection early came to be taken as a dynamic one, even though human knowledge does not yet understand the working of the forces involved. This reality of cause, as of force and every other form of power, Spencer explicitly affirms, but not in any real objective sense, only as subjective affection in its ultimate expression. That is to say, there is cause, but as to what it is, we are completely in the dark. States of consciousness, produced by

the inscrutable cause, are all we know. There is still room for what is true and needful in the principle enforced by Hume and Kant, namely, that the real connection between cause and effect is determinable only through experience, that is, in empiric and synthetic fashion by means of the events of uniform sequence; but a truer and larger place must be found, in connection therewith, for the working of thought, which, though not independent of the perceptive elements, yields to experience a necessary connection of effect with cause which experience could not itself offer. In regarding this necessary connection of cause and effect as an essential feature of their relation—that is, in recognising the relation as one of real dependence — Kant and Schopenhauer must be allowed to have shewn deeper insight than Hume and Mill. Spencer is himself obliged to admit that our conception of the “Unknown Power” is fashioned after that of our own mind’s causal activity. The efficient power presupposed in the Cause of all phenomena becomes intelligible only as so conceived, and absoluteness can be rationally attributed only to a First Cause which is absolute *existence*, not Spencer - wise, to unknown *force*. Spencer’s position in relation to the First Cause is far from self-consistent, for, admitting causation in nature, he yet assumes absolute power or force for which there is no antecedent cause. This, though he has himself said that, to admit anything uncaused is to take away the need to assume a cause for anything. In speaking of the

Absolute Force as Unknowable, Spencer fails to perceive that an existent cannot even be thought as unknowable, unless it is either known, or is continuous with the known. Thus said existent, being something for knowledge, cannot be unknowable existence. The nature of knowledge saves real existence from being unknowable. Spencer's First Cause is an "Incomprehensible Power," of which he will not allow us to know anything; but, if such Power must be taken as the First Efficient Cause, it can be no other than a Supreme Mind or Intelligence, since that of which it is First Cause is a cosmos—not blind and brute chaos. Mind in experience always goes before matter or mechanism, building up our knowledge of the latter. It is unthinkable that anything save Supreme Mind should, as First Cause, precede the world's vast and interminable mechanism.

(c) Certain of the more extreme forms of Idealism expressly disown the idea of First Cause. Because first causes in the world of experience seem to them an illusive quest, God is dispensed from being First Cause of the world of appearances in any real sense, and the mind turned from seeking any First Cause of the causes and phenomena of experience. Causation thus becomes a "mythological" term, and such idealism remains superior to the sphere of causes and effects. God is, to such forms of Neo-Hegelianism, the only metaphysical principle or cause, and anything like real or distinct causality is denied to individual men. Causation is for such forms of thought, according to Royce, "a very

subordinate idea in philosophy"; this, apparently, in defiance of all it may have been for the history of philosophy. (Royce, *The Religious Aspect of Philosophy*, p. 477.) Now, one may very well be idealist enough to maintain the world to be in the end a mental construction, but it is quite another thing "when causal explanation is dropped," and we are not allowed to hold the world of reality to be such an active and honest world as is involved in its casual determination of our discriminating and constructive consciousness. To divest the Divine Mind of all Causality, and to throw it, in Royce's fashion, merely upon perfect correspondence of its consciousness with things as they are, is to exhibit it as a monstrosity of Reason, and a paralytic in Will. Nothing could be more inept than a merely intellectualist philosophy, utterly impotent as bare abstract Thought to create a world without will, causal energy, and personal force. The finite is, in Neo-Hegelian thought, taken up organically into the Infinite, and finds, in this undifferentiated unity, not a cause in time, but a ground of all that happens, or is supposed to be "given." The real objects of nature are, on this view, resolved into mere modes of our conscious thinking, and the element of causality or dynamic energy disappears from things and selves. But this whole assertion of identity is so arbitrary and fictitious as to form no solution of the world problem, said world being a real and concrete system, with mighty causal energies whose efficiency rests at last upon the sole originating or Uncaused

Cause. One does not need to give up a true—a theistic—idealism in order to reject such an unreal, and merely mind-world: without matter, categories are still empty, as Kant said, and an external world is presented to thought for interpretation of its relation to a transcendent First Cause, so far as revealed to, and in, experience. The abstract necessities of reason, as presented in forms of idealism to which thought is the sole reality, can be no substitute for the causal realities of experience in time. Thus, while the inadequacy of the conception of God as Cause, in the usual form of presentation, is to be acknowledged or maintained, we have still to do with God as Ground of the world of space and time, within which He is, in this sense, still and always operative. So much for the idealistic extremes of Britain and America. When we turn to idealism in Germany, we see how its forward glances and monistic tendencies have drawn thought off from backward search after First or Efficient Cause, and sent it forward in quest of Final Cause—one vast constructive, purposeful end or idea. Less occupied it has become with the study of relations, such as cause and effect, and has thrown itself more upon the world of substantial being. The old craving for a sufficient Reason or First Cause has given way to an idealistic resting in world-movements or thought-processes—movements of reason within itself, with which God is identified.

(2.) Turn we now to *scientific* influences that have depreciated the First Cause conception. Scientific

monism of pantheistic and materialistic type thinks to dispense with a First or transcendent Cause, the Absolute being to it identical with the universe. There is, in Haeckel, no lack of acknowledgment of the causal principle, but it is "mechanical causation" which, for him, controls the universe. But such mechanical or scientific causation is never the simple and ultimate thing which it is often taken to be. Haeckel himself recognises the world to be an unified whole, but does not apprehend the need for ultimate or metaphysical explanation of such a world-whole, as something non-phenomenal which underlies the whole field of scientific causation, with its mere antecedence and sequence. Haeckel, however, fancies he has found a sufficient cause for the universe in the law of causality, taken in conjunction with the supreme law of substance. From the monistic side, it is asked why the first principle of movement cannot be found in matter, since matter appears an inexhaustible reservoir of energies. But modern metaphysics has replied that matter not only supplies, but *is*, energy and force; and that such conception of force or energy can be construed only in terms of Will. In the final quest of physics even, an unchanging substantive cause, amid the changes wrought of force, is sought as a real, though unconscious, result of a metaphysical craving. The very place and purpose of the First Cause argument is to combat the position of monistic theories of purely mechanical sort, and this it does by bringing out the essentially limited, conditioned, and dependent character of the universe as we know it. 'Tis this conditioned char-

acter of the universe that makes it an effect. If there is one thing which the most thorough science of the time does, it is to reduce the category of cause to the universal law of conditions, whereby all phenomena are joined together in an order of dependence. It appears to me no longer possible for theology to ignore, as it has so persistently done, those dynamical explanations of the world which, with their increasing tendency to drop the causal element, have found so much favour in the recent history of science. This dynamical account of the universe is still a quasi-metaphysical one, with which the view of First Cause as here presented is believed best to agree. What, of course, is most immediately given us in experience is the changeableness of the world and its unsatisfying character, but inferentially we soon reach far beyond this. If it be said that the universe cannot be taken as an effect unless it can be proved to have had a beginning, it is then to be remembered that causal agency can be inferred without the need of being observed, and that a Ground of existence, not a mere *prius* in time, is our need and quest. The universe may wear the character of an effect, and indeed the increasing knowledge of it by science makes it always more certainly known as an effect. Even its ordered character implies its dependence. Everywhere the forces of the universe seem to make for change, as geology and astronomy remind us. The whole world is seen to be in a state of change: in the world of appearance, a mechanical connection is everywhere observable: the self-sufficiency of the world is only apparent, and the cosmos



is surely advancing towards a state in which its energy will be transformed into heat, and its life and movement will cease: thought of necessity concludes to a single, ultimate Cause, which grounds and regulates the whole world-connexion, imparting to it order, law, and coherence. For there is a law of dynamic continuity running through the whole world of modern science, in virtue of which we see the change from cause to effect to be one of form rather than of substance. No rational foundation for a philosophy of Nature seems possible save with the Being of the Absolute as a primal datum. Not even Spencer got beyond the need of a First Cause as a datum of consciousness, and no scientific hypothesis, however ultimate—whether primal energy or ether—can take us to a beginning of things that is really self-explanatory. The causal series or indefinite regress explains nothing, and yet we have nothing better if we reject the postulation of a First Cause. There is, in reality, nothing arbitrary in such a postulation, for such a First Cause can never properly be reckoned a term among causes that began to be. Indeed, the principle of causality is only wrongfully applied, when it is sought to foist it upon a Being which never began to be. This uneffected Cause accounts for all else, is sufficient in itself, and is without relation of effect to anything else.

Coming back to the changeful character of the world, we recall the terms in which Huxley spoke of its impermanence: "In every part, at every moment, the state of the cosmos is the expression

of a transitory adjustment of contending forces; a scene of strife, in which all the combatants fall in turn. What is true of each part, is true of the whole. Natural knowledge tends more and more to the conclusion that 'all the choir of heaven and furniture of the earth' are the transitory forms of parcels of cosmic substance wending along the road of evolution, from nebulous potentiality, through endless growths of sun and planet and satellite; through all varieties of matter; through infinite diversities of life and thought; possibly, through modes of being of which we neither have a conception, nor are competent to form any, back to the indefinable latency from which they arose. Thus the most obvious attribute of the cosmos is its impermanence. It assumes the aspect not so much of a permanent entity as of a changeful process, in which naught endures save the flow of energy and the rational order that pervades it." (*Evolution and Ethics*, pp. 49-50.) This is so far good. But one cannot help feeling that, under all these changeful phenomena, substantial being may reside, whose contingency has to be shewn. I wish to record my clear conviction that theologians have treated the contingency of the world in a way too superficial—have shewn a lack of depth in thinking the contingency of the world could be so easily proved. They have failed to perceive that change need not make up the whole of reality, that it may be only the visible or exterior side of things, and that one can still ask, as to the ultimate elements whereof things are composed, whether they may not have in themselves sufficient reason for their being and for

the law of their combinations. Clearly, thought has no right to overlook that the contingency of the world may very well be denied—and has been—on its noumenal side, not in its phenomenal aspect. Certainly, we are bound to grant force to the agnostic contention that our knowledge of the world is still superficial, and confined to the phenomenal, rather than the noumenal, aspect of things. Even if we do not see the substance of the world to be necessary, it does not yet follow that it may not be necessary. No arguments against the eternity of matter and force are perfectly conclusive. The insufficient character of the reasons adduced for the contingency of the world may very well be set down to the insufficiency of human knowledge; but what we are here concerned with is, that theological thinkers have so inadequately realised the insufficient character of said reasons, and have taken the contingency of the world too easily for granted. Hence the position here taken up, that, however matter or the ultimate elements may elude us, in their noumenal or substantial aspects, we yet feel drawn, as by a necessity of thought, to postulate a Ground or Cause, of whose existence they are dependent manifestations, said Cause being to us Ground of the possibility of all things. But, when the contingent and dependent character of the world is taken to be most established, there springs out of that very fact a weakness which, strangely enough, is often overlooked. It is that the stable conclusion to God, as the Absolute Cause, is based upon the unstable or contingent character of the world, which latter might conceivably be a wholly unreal foundation. The trouble is, that thought may

sometimes be in danger of finding it easier to conclude, from the world's imperfect character, to the world as unreal and illusory, than to rise to an Absolute Reality that shall be perfect and complete. Yet such an absolutely perfect Reality is the goal of all our thinking—thought's imperious demand—difficult as it may be to harmonise with the facts of our imperfect moral experience.

And if the world be taken as real, a type of pantheistic thought is possible which may professedly disclaim the need to go beyond the world itself, as its own Evolving Cause. But no such self-evolving world is to be thought of save as the result of Will and Reason, immanent in the evolutionary process, and creative of its unity. Mind must, then, fall back, in a way dependent on the energy of thought and its necessities, on the need to postulate absolute and necessary Being, which, in the presence of the world, with its inert matter and blind energy, must be set in causal relations to it. But we must continue the scientific line of thought.

A dynamical unity is the universe to modern science, but equally it is to science, grown reflective and not merely observant, a rational unity—its rationality being the assumption on which science proceeds. Science is finding the unity of Nature suggested by the unities everywhere perceived—unities of process and development, and unities of organisation and expression. Do such unities—do evolutionary and molecular theories—suggest nothing of the nature of an effect—nothing of the presupposed Ground and Cause of the whole? Does the sum of scientific

knowledge—the observed, and inferred, unity of nature—not suggest a First Cause, on Whose transcendent causal energy the world depends, and by Whose power it lives? If such World-Ground or First Cause be God, the effects of His causal power cannot conceivably continue without Him: His presence is after no quantitative mode, but is that of essential causality. It is, of course, not consonant with the ideal of science to seek an extra-mundane Cause, or with the method of science, to seek anything save equivalent antecedent phenomena in terms of law, but it is perfectly rational to find the sum of scientific knowledge, with its explanation of the world for ever incomplete, suggest or point to some deeper cause—present to, and in, creation—than any open to the ways and instruments of science. The whole world of change or impermanence, as we know it, is really first made possible only through some ultimate Cause or Ground of its necessary connexion and laws. For Spencer is clearly not without reason in saying that the noumenon, declared in his *First Principles* to be everywhere viewed as the antithesis of the phenomenon, is throughout necessarily thought of as an actuality. “It is rigorously impossible to conceive that our knowledge is a knowledge of appearances only, without at the same time conceiving a reality of which they are the appearances.” Why should not such deeper cause or background be the Absolute Spirit—the Incomprehensible Life? The mechanical philosophy of Nature, which naturalistic Monism gives, remains strangely blind to the need and room that exist for some non-spatial and non-perceptible

element—some single category inclusive of all known forms of energy—to enter as causal factor and universal explanation in the world-problem. Such an element or Universal Being would constitute the background of things individual, form their bond of union, and make possible their interactions. Such One and Ultimate Cause (*vera causa sola*) is what must be held to interpenetrate all other causal relations, and give them reality, for that One force, so distributed, is the philosophical mode of interpreting the scientific doctrine of the conservation and correlation of energy. Only in such an element or Being can world-compelling synthetic thought find an Efficient Cause for the vast world-movements. For purely scientific evolution has no competency to recognise First Cause or absolute origin, and indeed it finds no power of self-origination. And yet, considering the fact that every true development involves a *terminus a quo*, such evolution might be allowed to suggest the probability of such an absolute beginning as is implied in the action of the First Cause. The root difficulty of an evolution, which is simply a conditioned series in time, clearly lies in our claiming any right to attribute absoluteness—absolute initiative—to any particular term in the causal series; and hence rational insight finds itself driven, as we maintain, to ground the causal series in relation to an absolute or transcendent Ground. Without such a single, ultimate Cause, which eternally grounds the whole evolutionary process, the whole train or chain of the developmental series must clearly appear as no better than a play of accidents. Thus we leave

behind the old difficulty as to Deity working upon a Nature external to Himself—a conception that made the Infinite power finite, both because there was something outside of it, and because its working on the external must be conceived as subject to law or conditions.

On Efficient Cause science does, and must, remain soundly agnostic. When, to the considerations already made, is added the fact that science has no manner of solution, from powers or qualities of matter known to it, for free, self-conscious beings, a new demand arises for a First Cause that shall be free, intelligent, and self-conscious. For, between the effect and its cause, there must be neither inadequacy nor disproportion. So, though the effect not only may, but must, be different from the cause—else there were no causation—yet the Primal Cause must be such as can produce the total universe. Hence we see why the First Principle of all things cannot be, as the monists wish, impersonal. No impersonal cosmic processes can possibly furnish a World-Ground for such a being as man. The First Cause must at least be personal as we are, however much more He may be. This is an inexorable demand of our thought, which absolutely refuses to be content with anything less, as First Cause, than a Being endowed with plenitude of ethical life, intellect, and will. For God is not First Cause in the ordinary sense of cause, whose relation to effect is properly physical, not ethical, and necessary, not free. In this strict sense, the world is *not* an effect, and no cause, in this sense, can form the *rationale* of the world. More than its

First Cause, in this aspect, is God : causality is an element in His relation to the world, but *cause* cannot be the principle of thought respecting One who is its free Originator, the self-determined action of whose Will is really the ultimate principle of the cosmos. The laws of Reason and of Morality, found in the world, must be accounted for, since neither the universe nor the human mind can be their cause. These laws are of a character so absolute and unconditional that they cannot be conceived otherwise than as true and existing, were there neither universe nor human mind ; hence an argument for a First Cause has sometimes been founded on these necessary truths alone. Their cause can be nothing either irrational or non-moral, and so arises a call for a Rational and Moral Intelligence, distinct from the world and man's mind, in Whom they are grounded. Why may not a moral rationality be as legitimately postulated for the world as the theoretic rationality assumed for it by science ? Why may the outworking of the World-Ground or First Cause not be taken as founded in righteousness, even though we have but imperfectly realised its ideals for us ? The First Cause is First Cause of an ordered and intelligible world, with harmony in its causes in relation to their effects, and that First Cause must not only be Supreme Intelligence—Universal Mind—but equally Ground of all things in virtue of its ethical moment. This the best metaphysical thought now fully realises. The First Cause or Ultimate Ground of all reality must be uncaused, and such Cause or Ground can only be One Eternal Mind or Spirit, by Whose will all things



are. To such unity of the First Cause we are led by the principle of Parsimony, which would make more than one unphilosophical, and by the unities which mark alike the laws of the universe and the necessary laws of reason. Thus is met the demand of those who, speaking from the scientific side, insist that "the character of the First Cause cannot be judged from the mode of action of any secondary agencies. One mode of action is as mysterious as another, so far as any relations to a First Cause are concerned. The intelligence of the First Cause can only be judged from the result." (J. P. Cooke, *The Credentials of Science the Warrant of Faith*, p. 252.)

While the scientific view must restrict itself to the actual universe, it is yet a thought suggestive and worthy of consideration, that the causal principle in the human mind presses on, by inherent impulse, from actual being, to that which is possible and conceivable. Nay, more, the possible is here not less objectively real than the actual. This consideration is the more necessary to be kept in mind, when it is taken into account that only the conventionality of science regards the look of causation as a backward one, and that a forward and progressive use of the principle, in relation to the developmental possibilities of the universe, is no less open to us than the regressive aspect of causation. Of course, this forward look or progressive aspect of causation is a synthetic one, whereas the regressive aspect takes analytic form. The importance of such a view of the Divine Will—the First Cause of all things—in its relation to the possible, is seen when we con-

sider how, for example, the great Aquinas wrongly supposed the world to be the best possible world—the best God could possibly create. Because God has chosen or desired to make this particular world, we may not infer that He has created all He could create. The Cause of the possible and the conceivable can be no other than the Cause of the actual, and this gives us at least a greater First Cause than any actual world would suggest. Indeed, it gives us a Cause or Ground of possibility that must be taken as infinite. Thus has it been attempted to found an argument for the First Cause on this aspect alone. Possibility is taken to be a fact in need of a cause; the human mind is denied as its cause, since the possible—as distinguished from the impossible—was possible before the human mind came into being. For like reason the universe cannot be the cause of possibility, since the possible would exist, were the universe swept away. Possibility, as infinite, requires an Infinite Cause. In our treatment, however, the stress has been laid upon the contingency of the actual universe. An absolute and intensive infinity is here maintained for Deity, in face of the difficulties felt by certain philosophic writers who have not been able to shed quantitative notions in this sphere of thought. The absolute and self-existent Ground and Cause of all things is, that is to say, as the Absolute Being, really infinite—One in our conceptions of Whom we have got clear away from thinking of infinite extension in space, and existence in infinite time. The very end of our study of the positive relations which God sustains

to the empirical world of space and time is just to raise us at last beyond itself to the spaceless and timeless Causality of the Deity who forms its Ultimate Ground and Cause. Surely for thought there could be no more glorious end.

The conclusion to which we are brought on the matter of the First Cause argument, customarily presented as an inference from effect to cause, is, that it is invalid, but that, as an argument from the contingent character of the world, to the necessity for a World-Ground, it retains validity and worth. Such self-existent and eternal World-Ground or First Cause is, by an inexorable law of thought, the necessary correlate of its finitude. Though we must so reason to Him from data of sense, yet may the view so gained be regarded as our first and most fundamental philosophical conception of God, as involving an Absolute Being necessarily existing. God and the world are not to be conceived as cause and effect, for modern metaphysics can by no possibility regard such an expression of the connexion between the world of experience and the Ground of all possible experience (no mere *ens extra-mundatum*) as anything like adequate. The true, abiding First Cause is God, taken as the ultimate and absolute Ground of the possibility of everything that is—the self-existent Cause of the ever-present world and its phenomena. Should this form of the argument appear to carry infinity only in implicit mode, God, it should be remembered, is, in its presentation of Him as the Absolute Being, taken as full intensive infinitude—infinite plenitude of existence. By such infinity is

meant no mere absence of limitation, but the positive conception of pure actuality, limitless existence—an infinity incommensurable with all that is limited. Or should it be asked whether, in this way, we have not found a Being who is *ens primum* (first Being) rather than *causa prima* (first Cause), our answer clearly is, that a Ground so related to the actual world is *causa prima* as well as *ens primum*—is for us *ens primum* precisely that He may be *causa prima*. The First Cause must be just such absolutely necessary Being or *ens a se*, else it were contingent, which the First Efficient Cause could not conceivably be. Such a Deity, as *causa sui*, creatively bringing forth the world out of His own potences, cannot be allowed to be an arbitrary resting-place, but a truly rational Ground, of thought. For the ontologic basis supplied in the *ens primum* or Absolute Being is not taken as something standing by itself and indeterminate, but something whose objective activities, as true First Cause, world-phenomena are, and whose nature they bespeak or expound. A World-Will, that should remain always potency, would be an untenable representation: idea must in it pass into actuality, that non-being may give place to being. Thus we preserve and maintain the First Cause argument in deeper form than the old Aristotelic mode, in which the search for a Prime Mover had relation only to the contingency of motion in matter; our argument goes deeper, being concerned with the contingency of being or matter itself. Neither motion nor matter carries necessity in itself; both are grounded in the necessary, ultimate, and self-existent Cause of all things.

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Among Books that may be studied, in connection with the foregoing chapter, may be noted :—

## I. HISTORICAL.

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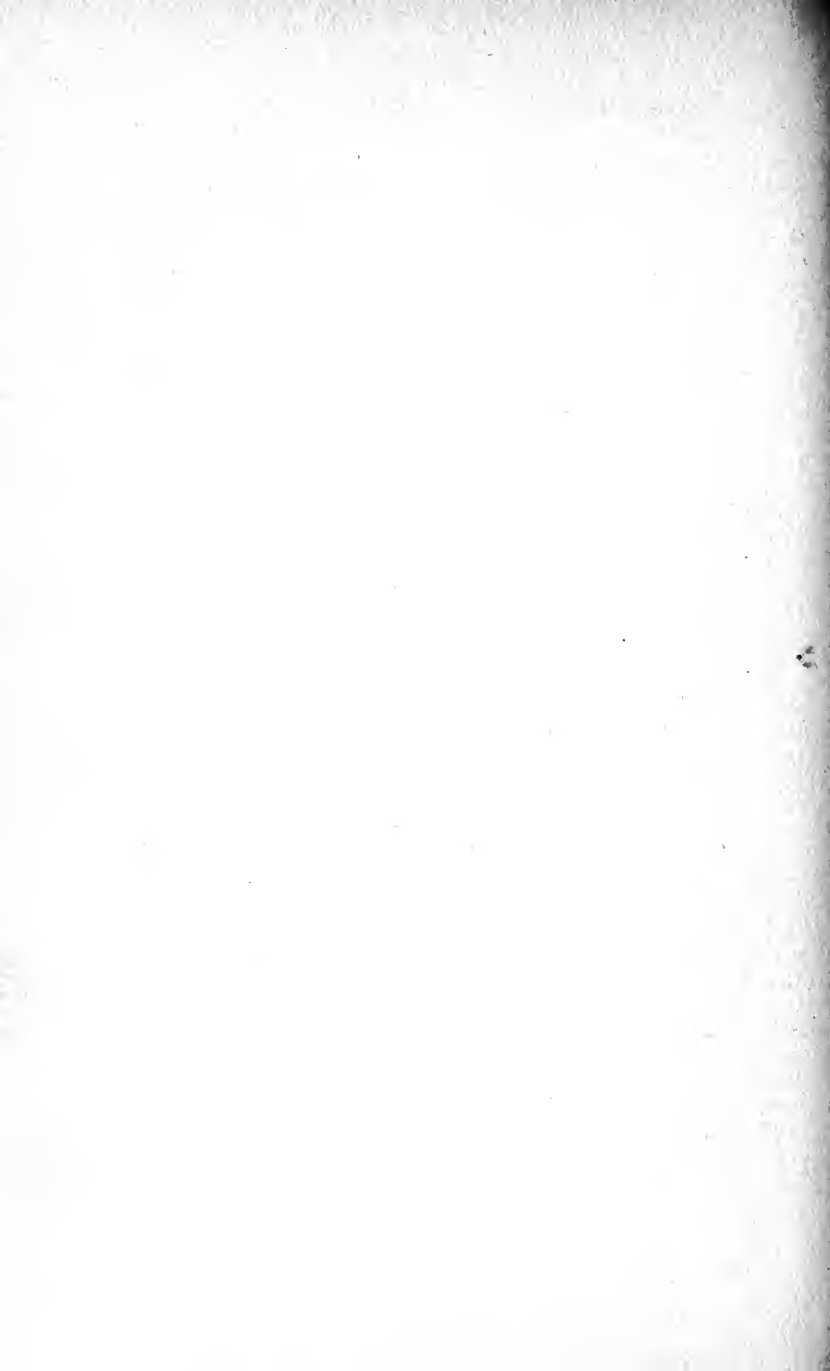
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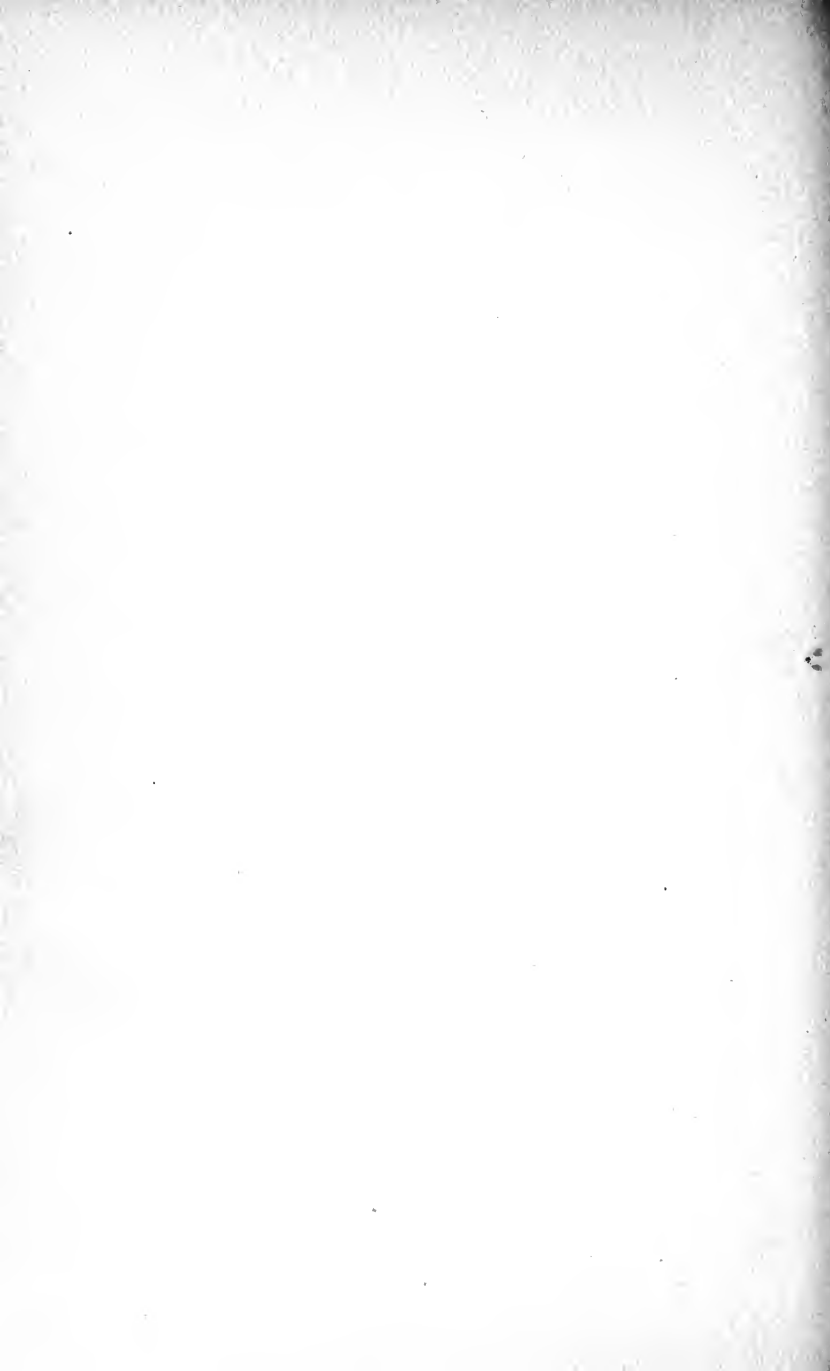
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